

**NEW**

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# MISSION NEWS

777 VALENCIA ST. • SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94110 • 695-8702 • VICTOR MILLER - EDITOR IN CHIEF

Photo by Jorge Zepeda



## HOUSING AUTHORITY MESS COULD COST \$50 MILLION FEDERAL FUNDS TO REBUILD BERNAL DWELLING AND PLAZA EAST PROJECTS MAY BE LOST

by Victor Miller

The hopes of hundreds of public housing tenants for long-awaited relief from the squalor and crime in their lives may be crushed if San Francisco's out-of-control Housing Authority cannot muster enough stability to meet contract requirements with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, necessary to avoid the loss of \$50 million in federal funds. As tremendous amounts of time and energy are devoted to the fight over the removal of Executive Director Felipe Floresca, the fate of what may be the largest single block of housing money San Francisco will see in decades is being jeopardized by a climate of turmoil, confusion and fear.

This massive allocation, part of a program called Hope VI, was made to the San Francisco Housing Authority in July of 1994, after a three-year effort by project residents, community groups and City officials. The money would be used to demolish two existing housing projects: Plaza East in the Western Addition and Bernal Dwelling, located at Army and Folsom in the Mission. Both projects would then be rebuilt with a more modern design, one without the open-access courtyards that have allowed the 200-unit, 500-tenant Bernal Dwelling to become a center for crack dealing and all manner of violence.

The fanfare and celebration with which the announcement of this huge windfall for the City's poorest tenants was

greeted last summer have now given way to widespread apprehension, at both the Housing Authority and the Mayor's Office, that the funds may be lost if deadlines are not met for tenant participation in a Hope VI master plan. One such deadline on December 15th has already been missed because Housing Authority staff and project residents have been unable to sit down a work together in a productive way. When asked the reason for this, Housing Commission President Barbara Meskunas said, "The entire staff we have to institute the community services component who have gone out to the projects have had their lives threatened."

There are millions of dollars in construction and other contracts involved in Hope VI, and evidently they are being ruthlessly fought over behind the scenes. One middle-level staff member refused to be named in any news story dealing with these issues because "I live here, I've got kids. You know what I mean?"

Juanita Marshal, Recording Secretary for the Public Housing Tenants Association and one who, as President of the Plaza East Tenant Association, struggled to make the reconstruction program a reality, was alarmed at the lack of progress. "It's a tragedy," she said. "We CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR

## CHAVEZ STREET NAMING DELAYED AGAIN

by Brian Doohan

As CalTrans and San Francisco negotiate the cost and responsibility of changing freeway signs to reflect the change of Army Street's name to "Cesar Chavez Boulevard," labor and Latino activists are proceeding with plans to honor the former Farmworkers' Union chief with a march and tree-planting to commemorate his birthday, March 31.

"The voting is done, the name is changed ... all of this is after the fact," says Eva Royale, a member of the coalition promoting the name change. "We've been speaking with the Supervisors and they've made it clear they're standing firm."

According to Royale, the pro-Chavez advocates will be planting along this street trees donated by Friends of the Urban Forest as a tribute to Chavez. Whether this gesture will pacify some of the more outspoken anti-Chavez residents and businesses remains to be seen -- despite the passing of the law, a letter-writing blitz against the name change continues in local papers.

Some supporters of the name change suspect that more activity is going on behind the scenes. CalTrans and the Supervisors, particularly the office of Susan Leal, give different accounts of what hap-

pened. In question is when CalTrans notified the City of its intent to demand remuneration for street signs and lighting changes, the amount of which rose from \$600,000 to \$900,000 over three days.

As negotiations continue, the \$900,000 seems to be shrinking almost hourly, although Leal would not confirm the parameters of the monetary negotiations at press time; and CalTrans spokesman Greg Bayol has made himself inaccessible during the talks. Leal has been updating Chavez supporters, expressing optimism that the matter will ultimately be resolved at little or no cost to the City; and Royale dismisses CalTrans' position.

"The whole purpose of this was to get people angry," she said, adding that the full name could be bolted onto existing signs without the complicated and expensive replacement process cited by CalTrans.

Meanwhile, the preservationist Victorian Alliance has asked the Supervisors to rescind their unanimous decision to rename the street.

Plans for the march and tree-planting are progressing, with several community meetings scheduled for this and next month. For information and updates, call Frank Martin DelCampo at 575-1740, ext. 135.

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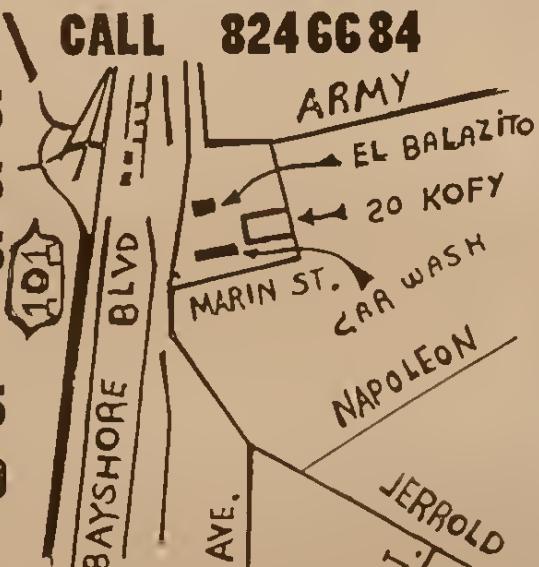


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# the Grassroots report



By: D. Michael Spero

We have no excuse. No excuse for the garbage, no excuse for the gang violence, the lack of youth activities, the run-down state of our commercial strips. The Mission is not a poverty-stricken underclass neighborhood, you know. We have a good mix of working and middle-class residents, lots of artists, teachers and entrepreneurs, dozens of nonprofit service providers, hundreds of experienced political activists. This place should be paradise. What's the problem? Why can't we get anything done?

Obviously, the steady influx of nearly destitute, non-English speaking immigrants puts a strain on our schools, housing and youth services. Remember, though, many immigrant parents are educated, and all are motivated. We have the resources to handle our problems.

Some people expect government to do it all. They blame funding cutbacks for the deplorable state of our streets and the aimless lives of many youth. I'm not talking to those people; they're lost anyway. Government money only helps when communities are organized enough to put it where it does some good. Otherwise, it just funds a class of poverty pimps.

In reality, the Mission's paralysis comes almost entirely from internal factors. We have three major factions: the nonprofit service providers, the resident organizations and the merchant groups. These factions rarely even speak, much less work together. The resident groups are mostly English-speaking

homeowners. They're volunteers, tending to focus on safety and beautification issues, mostly ignoring the special problems of the poor. The nonprofits have paid staff, many living outside the Mission, often out of the City. They provide various essential services to, and claim to speak for, low-income renters, many of whom are recent immigrants. Business owners, who must struggle to make a profit, too often ignore the welfare of the neighborhood. In spite of the Mission's liberalism and diversity, antagonisms among these groups often take on racial, class and political overtones.

Greatly complicating the problem is the disunity within each faction. There are at least 5 business groups and 20 neighborhood clubs, for example; and they rarely cooperate. If you want to know how a Pachinko ball feels, try organizing in the Mission.

Have you ever been to a Mission-wide meeting? It's worse than the Patient Management Council at Napa State. Invariably, the first hour or so consists of people yelling, "Why weren't we notified?" If organizers have done any preparatory work, people complain that everything was decided without them. If they haven't, people scream that they're being asked to sign a blank check. You often hear both criticisms at the same meeting! With so many groups and no network between them, how can you notify everyone? How do you know who everyone is? If you tried to consult everyone before drawing up a plan, you'd never get your pencil on paper

## STOP THE MISSION MADNESS

for the first draft.

In the past year, the resident/nonprofit conflict has escalated to open warfare, with residents trying to stop every housing development and nonprofit project. Meanwhile, nonprofits have cooked up plans for redevelopment that ignore residents, and pressured police to stop efforts to bring block clubs together.

All communities share this problem to some extent, of course. There are always power-grabbers and ego-trippers. But in the Mission, it's gone crazy. "It's a disease there," one mayoral staffer told me.

What angers all well-meaning Missionites is that business, nonprofit and resident groups all want pretty much the same things: a safe, healthy neighborhood; a thriving economy; good schools. How can we stop the madness and work together?

In my view, resident groups should take the lead. We should pull ourselves into a network that includes a cross-section of renters (who are 80 percent of Mission residents) and concern itself with problems of poverty and justice as

well as safety issues. Then we need to get business to commit to working with residents and police to create safe, pleasant commercial areas and attract new investment. Then we reach out to service providers to see how we can facilitate and improve their programs, while protecting our own interests.

For their part, nonprofits have to consult with neighborhood groups before undertaking any new action. The Community Peace Initiative, run by a coalition of nonprofits, recently sent letters asking business owners to participate in a meeting to create a redevelopment plan for the Mission. Residents were not even mentioned! At the meeting, homeowners shouted down redevelopment proponent Ellen Gavin and interrupted nearly every nonprofit who tried to speak. Businesspeople were absent in huge numbers. Mission Disease is getting worse. It's time for serious organizers in our neighborhood to pull together a new, unified leadership. Until we do, the Mission's vast potential will remain Paradise Lost.

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## HOUSING AUTHORITY MESS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

worked so hard to get that grant. Everything was going nice until the money came in, then there were all these people I never saw before. Now nothing is moving."

As many people have been, she was confused about where Housing Authority Executive Director Felipe Floresca stands. "I don't know where he's coming from or if he's coming at all". Marshal said she wrote a letter to the mayor voicing her concerns, but the Mayor's Office could not locate a copy or any record of having received it. Marshal and Oblanca Henry of Bernal Dwelling were both replaced as presidents of their respective tenants associations following the finalization of the Hope VI contract award.

Felipe Floresca resigned the same day of the missed HUD deadline but then unresigned and is currently fighting an apparently losing battle with the Housing Commission to retain his job. Floresca has been blamed for a variety of sins, not least of which is mishandling the Hope VI Program. Floresca, the brother-in-law of Superintendent of Education Bill Rojas, was selected for the executive director's job by Mayor Jordan less than a year ago. Asked if part of the problem with the Hope VI reconstruction was Floresca's willingness to work with known drug dealers in the projects, Meskunas said, "Yes. The big problem with Bernal Dwelling and Plaza East is that the tenants don't even know what's going on. Tenants call the [Housing Authority] staff to ask what's happening because they're afraid to go to the meetings." Floresca did not return phone calls from the News.

A December 21 article in the San Francisco Chronicle identified convicted drug dealer Jeffrey Branner and Malik Rahim as part of a group that had met with

Floresca in an attempt to get a moving contract from the Housing Authority. (The Hope VI funds include \$400,000 for moving tenants displaced by reconstruction.)

## A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

Branner and members of his family have certain degree of local notoriety. They have been the target of two well-publicized drug raids on the Bernal Dwelling conducted jointly by the FBI and San Francisco Police Department.

One such raid in 1986 resulted in a member of the Branner family being convicted and sentenced for the sale of crack cocaine. In 1992, wild shots from gun fights inside Bernal Dwelling would at times fly across Army Street into Leonard Flynn School. One bullet hit a teacher's aide in the back, where it remains permanently lodged. School officials were forced to institute a regular series of duck-and-cover drills for children. This spurred the SFPD and FBI to conduct a combined operation, beginning in December 1992, that resulted in 46 arrests for narcotics- and gun-related activity. As in most drug-related cases around here, few of those arrested were legal residents of the projects. The operation was ended prematurely in the fall of 1993 when it was feared the shooting death of Eugene Branner would cause a wave of retaliation unless gang members were taken off the streets. Of the six Branner family members arrested, all were convicted of charges relating to crack cocaine, with the exception of Jeffrey Branner, whose trial is scheduled to start in a few weeks.

## WHO'S GOING TO GO?

Both Jeffrey Branner and Malik Rahim have been high-profile presences in recent Housing Authority politics. At a January 12 meeting of the San Francisco Housing Commission, when the president of the Bernal Dwelling Tenant Association, Sharon Adams, was called to speak, she walked to the podium accompanied by Branner and Rahim. Of the three, public testimony was given only by Rahim, who, saying he spoke on behalf of the Bernal Dwelling tenants, told the commissioners, "We met today with Jim Wonderman and told him our position; the person that needs to go is Barbara Meskunas. Our hope is that Mr. Floresca will stay, and I wish he had the courage to let Jeff and I come up there and clean it out." (Wonderman, chief aide to Mayor Jordan, was out of town at press time; and Rahim declined to discuss what transpired at the meeting. One City Hall insider said, "Wonderman was just stupid to meet with those people.")

At the commission meeting, Rahim also held up a petition calling for Barbara Meskunas' removal as Housing Commissioner and said he would have 2000 signatures by the end of February. Two weeks later, Rahim said the petition drive was on hold and he was "hoping we can come to some type of solution and start moving together." He told the News he is working with a group called the Coalition of Concerned Tenants of Public Housing, which was active in 10 different housing projects and would be holding a tenant summit from April 7 to 9 at Ella Hill Hutch Community Center. Rahim defended Jeffrey Branner as a man who "is trying to turn his life around" and who, Rahim claimed, was a Narcotics Anonymous founder and gang truce mediator. Rahim did not deny that the current political turmoil could mean the loss of the Hope VI funds but said, "If the issues of the Bernal Dwelling tenants are not addressed, maybe it's not a bad thing."

While Rahim and Branner may see themselves as tenant organizers, the San Francisco Police Department regards

them as "individuals not on the lease," official jargon for non-residents of the projects. According to Sgt. Ed Dullea of the SFPD Housing Task Force, both Rahim and Branner are personae non grata at Bernal Dwelling and have been cited "lots of times" for trespassing -- citations on which, according to Dullea, the District Attorney's Office routinely fails to act. Despite this persona non grata status, the News reached Rahim by simply calling the office number at Bernal Dwelling.

## GINGRICH FACTOR

This type of confused and volatile situation gives credence to Felipe Floresca's detractors, who describe the Housing Authority during his term of office as a rudderless ship. Veteran public-housing activist Margaret Verges, who is sharply critical of Floresca -- "The worst thing he ever did was apply for the job" -- does not think that merely firing him will resolve the Hope VI crisis. "Even if we got rid of him tomorrow, we'd still have to scramble like hell to keep that money. Right now our credibility is totally blown." Given the radical turn to the right of the 104th Congress, which sees San Francisco as an unfriendly foreign government, it is obvious that the process must get back on track. The Gingrichian bean-counters in D.C. are not likely to let \$50 million sit collecting dust while our left-coast city desperately tries to put its political house in order. Nearly everyone who has followed this whole affair realizes something needs to happen -- and soon -- to keep Hope VI alive.

Meanwhile, homeowners near Bernal Dwelling will continue to compete for bragging rights over whose house has more bullet holes; and teachers at Flynn School will continue to cast anxious glances across Army Street. Worst of all, another group of children in Bernal Dwelling will be coming of age amid the same filth and violence that has fed the rage of previous generations and threatens to poison the lives of this generation as well.

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# INSPECTING THE INSPECTORS

## NEW BUILDING COMMISSION BEGINS ITS WORK

by Brian Doohan

**T**errified, troubled tenants shuddering in heatless hotels and apartment buildings with sewage lines hooked up to dishwashers ...

Dilapidated eyesores that send property owners screaming about their neighborhoods ...

Builders and architects exasperated with Byzantine code regulations, haphazardly enforced ...

The City's Bureau of Building Inspections (BBI) has infuriated so many citizens who normally lack common ground that last November, a strange coalition of landlords and tenants, construction interests and even some of BBI's own code inspectors supported Proposition G, which created a seven-member Building Inspection Commission authorized to investigate and act upon public complaints.

Now, the hoped-for magnificent seven (four appointed by Mayor Jordan, the other three by outgoing Board of Supervisors President Angela Alioto) are rolling up their sleeves to dig into the greasy sink of code enforcement. Will their ideals survive the glacial grinding of bureaucracy and the maneuverings of a cahal of slum-property owners who routinely exploit every legal loophole to avoid compliance?

The sponsors of Prop. G think so.

"It's doing everything we wanted it to," says Randy Shaw of the Tenderloin Housing Clinic, one of the tenant organizations that participated in the ordinance drafting and campaign. About the open flaunting of habitability codes, Shaw declared, "That won't happen anymore. That's history!"

Joe O'Donoghue, spokesman for the Residential Builders' Association, predicted that BIC would improve the Department's efficiency. "They've already eliminated some management positions and we expect they'll cut more -- and use the savings to hire front-line inspectors."

As mandated by Proposition G, each of the seven new Commissioners brings his or her particular expertise to the problem of code enforcement. The measure called for the Mayor's appointments to include a structural engineer, a licensed architect, a residential builder and a representative of a nonprofit developer; the Supervisorial appointees are to consist of a residential tenant, a landlord and a member of the general public.

The appointments completed and the new Commissioners sworn in, the *News* sounded them out at a January meeting during which architect Bobbie Sue Hood was elected President and Patrick Buscovich, a structural engineer with a

specialty in seismic strengthening, was chosen Vice-President.

President Hood said that BIC should settle complaints "before they go to court" -- the latter an expensive and time-consuming process that pleases nobody except the savvy slumlords well-versed in loopholes that have allowed some cases to drag on as long as 40 years.

Buscovich and contractor Roy Guinnane expressed a desire to expedite the permit process. "It should be more user-friendly," Buscovich said.

Mission Resident Armando Vasquez, a project manager with the Mission Housing Development Corporation, agrees with the "perception that the BBI wasn't user-friendly." As Advisory Board President of St. Peter's Housing Committee, he's seen everything from apartments heatless for years to lead paint and collapsing ceilings; and BIC will spur the Department to take into account the tenants who live in the buildings as well as the owners and builders.

Mission resident and realty consultant Robert G. Davis, one of the three Alioto appointees, said code enforcement benefits property owners and landlords as much as tenants. A native of Harlem and the South Bronx who moved here 17 years ago, Davis cited the negligence of New York's inspection policy in allowing poor, minority neighborhoods to become "ghost towns."

"I believe there is a consensus of the Commission that health and welfare requires a responsive building inspection force."

Like Buscovich, he sees the recent Kohe earthquake as a warning. "We cannot circumvent life-threatening violations." And, like Vasquez, he expressed concern about minority representation at BBI and such policies as English-only noticing. "As a resident, a landlord and a father in the Mission, [I believe] we need to have a quality of life that is reasonable."

The other Alioto appointees are Eileen Hansen, an attorney and AIDS activist who nominated Hood; and tenant organizer Jamie Sanbonmatsu, a Mission resident and former Director of the North of Market Planning Coalition -- which serves an area where, like the Mission, there are many residential hotels occupied by an elderly, poor and often non-English speaking population. "We've got to get the heat on, make sure ceilings don't fall down ... we're going to make the res. hotel owners abide by the rules."

Ah yes ... those rules.

BIC members and observers agree that the BBI's problems lie not so much in the need for legislation as for enforcement. Commissioner Guinnane and O'Donoghue said they were not satisfied



with the City Attorney's record in prosecuting repeat violators (known around BBI circles as "frequent fliers"); and, in fact, O'Donoghue suggested that outside contractors he brought in to clear up the backlog of condemned building cases, which number well into the hundreds and date back to the 1950s.

As a first step, Commissioner Sanbonmatsu suggested turning up the heat on scofflaws by making them pay the same \$68 reinspection fee that builders and remodelers are charged. Presently, no matter how blatant the violation or how often an inspector flunks a building, the landlords gets a free ride.

Commissioner Davis, an advocate for small property owners, warned against burdening them with fees when the money might better be spent on repairs; and negotiation of this issue is likely to play out over the next few months.

Among other issues is BIC's role in Supervisor Susan Leal's pending handicap-access legislation and -- as ever -- the budget.

One duty that BIC has already discharged is the selection of Frank Y. Chiu as Director. Chiu won plaudits from builders for streamlining the permit process by developing a "one-stop shop"; and for managing the permit deluge transpiring in the aftermath of the Loma Prieta quake. "Frank Chiu will bring professionalism and enthusiasm to this newly created department," Mayor Jordan said.

"I want to run the Department like a good business," said Chiu. He allowed that BIC will have the power to place the worst buildings into receivership -- effectively taking them over to make repairs -- but also admitted that owners would still

be able to tie matters up in court. "They have their due process."

To better track the worst of the worst, Sanbonmatsu suggested a ratings system whereby better-maintained buildings would be inspected less frequently than roach motels. He also suggested a more comprehensive room-by-room inspection of residential hotels, a policy that may raise civil liberties and Fourth Amendment issues. BIC has already begun a liaison with the Fire Department; and joint efforts (such as that undertaken several years ago with Mission police to clean up a crime-infested hotel adjoining a public school) will have to be carefully planned to avoid such fiascos as the recent SFPD/State Alcoholic Beverages Commission raid on an AIDS fundraiser South of Market.

Playing the key role of traffic controller will be Leslie Stansfield, a senior inspector whose promotion was praised by Shaw as "the San Francisco equivalent of Nelson Mandela's ascension to the Presidency after being imprisoned all these years." He was referring to Stansfield's near-pariah status among BBI superiors who, Shaw said, "resented the fact that she told the truth" about BBI incompetency.

One hopes the task of code enforcement will prove less daunting than the reformation of South Africa -- but experience augurs that it won't be by much!

Complaints to the BBI, whether from tenants, contractors or any other interested party, should be made to Leslie Stansfield at 558-6131. BIC will meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. and the third Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. at the Born Auditorium, 170 Otis Street.

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# RODRIGO BETANCUR 1953-1994

by Jack Hirschman

**M**any were shocked and saddened to learn that noted sculptor and multimedia artist Rodrigo Betancur, a leading San Francisco cultural worker, died last December 28 at age 41 after a long struggle with lymphoma cancer.

Betancur kept his battle with cancer hidden from even his close friends and concentrated on completing his final work, a monumental video document of the San Francisco homeless movement. "No Room at the Inn" was completed and screened locally only months before his death.

Rodrigo was born and raised in Colombia and held degrees from the University of Antioquia in Medellin, Colombia (1976) and from the Escuela Nacional de Antropología in Mexico (1981). He also studied at San Francisco State University and the San Francisco Art Institute.

In 1980 he received a grant to travel to Poland and assist Jerzy Grotowski on the development of the Theater of the Sources, and later worked with Grotowski in Mexico. He also taught Art and Theater in Colombia, Mexico, and here at Buena Vista elementary school and the Mission Cultural Center.

From his arrival in San Francisco in 1982 until his death, Rodrigo participated in over 25 exhibitions, installations and multimedia events that included his sculpture and videos. In 1990 he helped coordinate and organize the First Continental Chasky, an event involving 50 artists depicting 500 years of "the other America."

Rodrigo documented the annual



Chasky events and eventually produced "Autodescubrimiento/Self Discovery: 1492-1992," a 72-minute video that has been shown in Montreal and at festivals in Leipzig, San Antonio, Mexico City and Havana.

"No Room at the Inn" spans a period from Christmas 1992 to Christmas 1993,

and is perhaps his finest achievement. Working closely with his companion Joanne Kowalski, Betancur began the project as "an observer with a video camera." But as his camera recorded the reality of life on the streets and Rodrigo witnessed the struggles of the most oppressed stratum of society, he became profoundly engaged.

The beauty of the video is that Betancur allows the homeless themselves to speak powerfully and politically against the brutal Matrix attacks of Mayor Frank Jordan, and shows the organized defense of the forces demanding justice for the disenfranchised.

In a moving tribute after Betancur's death, Kowalski wrote: "To his friends, those of you who lived and worked with him -- his final wish was for you to continue on the paths you forged together ... it is the greatest tribute to his life which you can make ... Rodrigo Betancur was always and above all a man who struggled to make his ideals conscious in everything he did. He would want you to do the same."

"No Room at the Inn" will be included in a memorial exhibition of his sculpture, posters, and other videos in February at The Luggage Store Gallery, 1007 Market Street (near Sixth). For further information call The Luggage Store at 415/255-5971.

**Good and Gentle Fire**  
a poem by Jack Hirschman  
In Memoriam Rodrigo Betancur  
(1953-1994)

Always,  
because there was an energy for life art  
a kind of humming sigh all entangled with  
his beautifully broken English  
like a passionate shy that came from  
suffering so many hopes and despairs  
converging on his body and soul, so  
he'd call it a Convergence  
and arrange for 10 artists to show

I thought: where does a guy like that go?  
Now that he's dead I know. Rodrigo,  
how old is snow? When will we wrap  
ourselves in jaguar?  
Who knows how to eat  
with a full heart anymore?

You were in years young enough to be  
my son, yet according to 6-Rabbit  
we were the same age with respect  
to the end of one cycle  
and the beginning of another.

Now I just wanna go into a doorway  
and sit and shiver over you a little.

Remember us, whose memories  
everyday are being disappeared  
or "moused" away.  
I think you'll be with some of us a long  
time after the smoke has lifted.  
I'll look you up in the Book of Tizimin  
as soon as I'm born.

Don't forget it's not altogether  
a question simply of dark complexions,  
affectionate awkwardness in speaking,  
camaraderie singing The Internationale,  
brother sculptor, sister cast in  
the foundry of bronze laughter  
and hard work;  
it's that we liked the feel of your  
dedication hanging around these  
Mission streets  
bringing whisper's breath to the embers  
of a feather and making flame  
live a little more in those alleys and  
doorways where human potatoes  
had been mashed and contaminated  
by contact with a regime of rot,  
and thrown away to petrify  
in the freezing darkness.

The homeless kiss your sky for the one  
you wrapped around their bodies  
for a while, Rodrigo Betancur,  
gentle comrade, good and gentle fire.

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# SNAP SHOTS

as inspired by Snap the Wonder Dog

## It's Been Seven Dog Years

It'll be a year this month (seven years from Snap's perspective) that the Wonder Dog first saw her image in print and *Snapshots* first saw the light of day. This isn't the kind of sentimental anniversary that calls for celebration, but it is a passage of time that warrants at least a moment of reflection -- if only to recall the purpose of this whole exercise. So, for those who missed (or forgot) its debut, *Snapshots* evolved from the below prologue:

"One newspaper has a feature column called 'Dog Bites.' Another simply features characters who are 'In the Dog House.' Needless to say, the editorial tones of these columns are rather cynical, in line with the odd etymological spirit of the word. (Cynical derives from the Greek *kynikos*, which means 'like a dog.')

"Aside from being an insult to doggy spirits everywhere, cynical columns are already in abundance.

"By contrast, in *The Hidden Life of Dogs* (a recent essay by E.M. Thomas), the author compassionately examines canine consciousness -- specifically the traits of loyalty, patience, kindness. The perspective reminded me of repeated remarks by my coworkers about how Soap (the Wonder Dog) 'humanizes' and 'energizes' the office when she's around.

"So, in sum, the aspiration of *Snap Shots* is simply to chronicle the 'dogged' persistence of various community efforts in the Mission."

## Cause for Celebration

Though an honest review of the year

would state that the column itself has (in moments of weakness) lapsed into cynical discourse, there is no question that the dogged persistence of many community efforts has indeed resulted in cause for celebration.

Most notable are the recent appointments of Mission residents Armando Vasquez and Jamie Sanbonmatsu to the new, voter-mandated citizens' commission that will oversee the Department of Building Inspection.

The very existence of this commission is due to the successful activism of numerous Mission District loyalists. In fact, it was 2 years ago this month (14 years from Soap's perspective) that an angry Coalition for Code Enforcement (CCE) first staged a public hearing with the old bureaucracy in charge of building inspection.

Vasquez took photographs of this event for the Coalition, thus recording the nine demands set forth by the CCE at that time. Each demand was based on the devastating need for the City to be more accountable for its housing codes, more aware of its housing conditions. The final and most far-reaching demand was to form a citizens' commission.

Although the former Bureau of Building Inspection ignored each of the matters raised that night, the CCE persisted by bringing its agenda to the streets; to the media; to the City Attorney; to the Board of Supervisors and, finally, to the voters. Sanbonmatsu, a community organizer with the Tenderloin Housing Clinic, was integral to the coordination of each these

CCE campaigns. This Citywide coalition included dozens of Mission activists from such groups as St. Peter's Housing Committee (of which Vasquez is a Board Member), the Mission Affordable Housing Alliance (in which Vasquez is an activist) and Mission Housing Development Corporation (at which Vasquez is an architect).

At a party hosted by St. Peter's Housing Committee after his appointment to the Commission by Mayor Jordan, Vasquez discussed his goals as a new commissioner. Many of the CCE's unmet demands, recorded by his own camera two years earlier, were on his list of aspirations.

Myrna Melgar, a local activist who has worked with both these new commissioners in the last five years, mused over the chain of events. "Who was the last time a commissioner with grass-roots support and access was appointed by this administration? It's pretty incredible. We've really got something to celebrate here."

## Let's Do Lunch

Out of the broader Coalition for Code Enforcement grew several new alliances, each with reasons of its own to celebrate. The City Attorney's Code Enforcement Task Force and San Francisco SAFE, for example, have become more closely linked with community-based efforts in the Mission.

When local merchants escalated their complaints to the police about criminal activity at 16th and Mission, representatives from both the City Attorney's Office and SAFE coordinated a meeting with the owners of the 16th and Mission Cafeteria. Together, they discussed practical measures that business owners can employ in order to prevent illicit activity in their establishments.

The Cafeteria owners, receptive to the advice, promptly made some key changes. And the local neighbors, appreciative of these efforts, held a Lunch-In.

Ethel Newlin, facilitator of the 16th and Mission Community Public Safety Mini-Task Force, sent out dozens of flyers. "This Cafeteria has been used as a place of business by the criminal element of the area for too long. It's time that we ... take advantage of decent food at a

reasonable price right at the heart of our community," Newlin wrote. "Let's show the 'bad guys' that we will not tolerate illegal activities in public places any more. Let's show that we support the businesses in our community. Let's do Lunch!" Even the most cynical of souls would have been moved by mood of this meal and the fine turnout for this gallant gesture.

## Dealing with Drugs

The 16th Street Neighborhood Association is also eager to discuss practical measures that merchants and residents alike can employ to mitigate the crime and stress associated with drug sales along 16th Street.

Molly Hankwitz, an Association member, is helping to coordinate what she calls "a real roll-up-your-sleeves kind of workshop." She explains that "merchants and residents have expressed a lot of frustration" to the 16th Street Neighborhood Association about the drug activity in the neighborhood. "People are really isolated from one another," Hankwitz adds, even though numerous people -- both within and without the Mission -- have experienced dramatic successes in mitigating drug-related problems. "We want to bring people together for some constructive dialogue and problem-solving."

As of this writing, the workshop is scheduled for Thursday, February 23 at 6 p.m. in the community room of the new Mission Police Station at 17th and Valencia. To confirm the time and date and/or to learn more information, call 558-8133.

## Attitude is Everything

Whether she's at home, in my office, at the beach or strolling down Valencia Street, Snap is always looking for tennis balls. It's odd, I know; but what's odder is that she always finds them. She's got a nose for them. They're fun. They're out there. That's nearly all there is to it. Attitude. It's contagious.

Same thing with cynicism. Fed up with community politics in the Mission? Don't succumb! Sniff around for the good stuff. Keep your eye on the resolutions. Develop a nose for the solutions. They're fun. They're out there. That's nearly all there is to it. Attitude. It can be contagious.



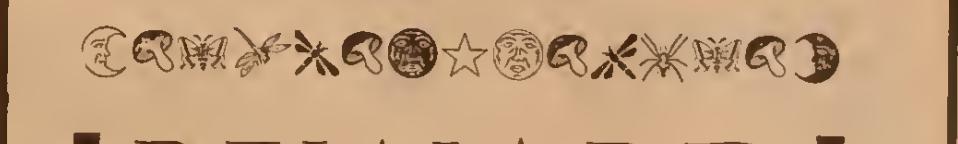
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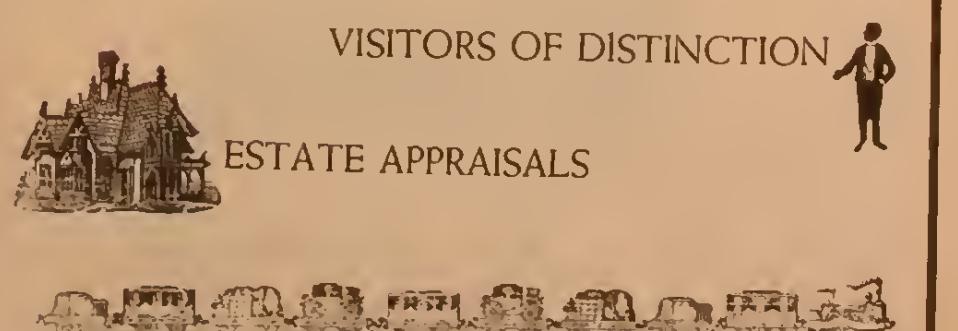
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# REDEVELOPMENT CONTROVERSY GROWS

by Victor Miller

**O**n January 19, the second public meeting in as many months was held at the Youth For Service Building at 25 14th Street to determine what role, if any, San Francisco the Redevelopment Agency should play in the Mission. Property owners and service-organization representatives once again faced off in a shouting and name-calling competition that did little to advance the debate on of redevelopment but did serve to further polarize the various factions within the neighborhood.

The meeting was called by the Community Peace Initiative (CPI), a coalition of community groups attempting to deal with the wide range of social problems at the root of the Mission's continuing crisis of youth-on-youth violence, ie. gangs. Redevelopment is one of many options CPI is considering as a remedy to the Mission's economic stagnation, but it is one that has brought a sharp negative reaction. Residents remember the Redevelopment Agency's callous displacement of minority and low-income communities in the past. Property owners, especially homeowners, are apprehensive about Agency's broad land-use powers, especially eminent domain, which would allow the seizure of private property. Both residents and property owners were well represented and loaded for bear on January 19.

The meeting was co-chaired by Ellen Gavin, director of BRAVA, a women's theater group located on Bryant Street. Gavin, who was almost immediately at odds with the majority of those in attendance, admitted she had initiated the drive for redevelopment in order to acquire funding for a better theater space for her group. This prompted Frank Morales, Chairman of the Mayor's Task Force on the Mission, to tell Gavin, "You have sold the soul of this community for a theater." A barrage of other accusations against Gavin and redevelopment were

less polite. "We don't need this damn money," said 25-year resident homeowner Vivian Azadian.

Gavin determinedly tried to pass out information sheets on redevelopment, but people were more interested in pursuing the attack. "All these [nonprofit] organizations are on the public hog trough," said long-time Mission activist Rose Churchwar.

Gavin, responding angrily that "Many people who favor redevelopment have committed their lives to working in this community," then declared, "I have not been allowed to express my opinion," and stormed off. Co-chair Mitchell Salazar, Executive Director of the Real Alternatives Program, did his best to deal with the chaos that ensued as residents attacked nonprofit organization heads as "poverty pimps" and redevelopment as a "scam." Rick Sorro of Mission Hiring Hall countered that his group, in conjunction with CPI, had created a Citywide resident hiring plan for all public works projects. "There are no pimps working in nonprofits working in the Mission," he said.

After about an hour of this digressive nastiness, the meeting focused on the question of how any sane discussion of redevelopment was to move forward. "There needs to be a forum where people feel they are not going to get screwed," said Chris Collins, President of the Mission Merchants' Association. While efforts to control the debate over redevelopment have shifted back and forth between CPI and the property-owner-oriented Mayor's Task Force on the Mission, neither group alone has been able to set up a very orderly or very public forum on the issue. In December, the Task Force hearing on redevelopment (see *New Mission News*, January 1995) was a somewhat less vituperative version of the bottle-of-scorpions show put on by CPI.

At the end of the CPI session, representatives of both groups promised to work together; and there were even some

positive but not very concrete allusions to a co-sponsored public hearing on redevelopment in the future. Right now, except for a growing amount of ill will, things appear to be at a dead halt.

Whatever side of the issue one is on, it's hard to disagree with one woman at the January debacle who said, "We're tearing each other apart here."

## UNENCOURAGING REDEVELOPMENTS



**W**hile the theoretical benefits and past abuses of the Redevelopment Agency have been the focal point of public discussion, two recent incidents involving the Agency provide some insight into how responsive it is to the communities it serves.

On January 17, the 24th Street Merchants' Association sent a letter to the Redevelopment Agency's executive director, Clifford Graves, requesting a response to an Association proposal to use \$150,000 in Redevelopment funds -- already allocated to the Mission -- for a commercial loan program. The Association submitted its proposal nine months ago on March 16, 1994, but as of press time has not received any formal communication from the Agency one way or the other. The \$150,000 is part of a \$1,000,000 grant (half of what the community had requested) approved back in January 1992.

In a more egregious turn of events, the Agency nearly sabotaged a major work of art by muralist and *New Mission News* contributing artist Rigo '95. The giant "Inner City Home" piece pictured above is on the newly built Knox Hotel on 6th Street. The Knox, an affordable housing development built by the 6th Street Development Company, one of a group of nonprofits known as TODCO, received financial assistance from the Redevelopment Agency. According to John Eberling, Executive Vice President of TODCO, Redevelopment staff -- angered that they were not given design control over the mural -- urged the Department of Building Inspection to declare the mural a "sign erected without proper permits." The notice of violation was eventually tossed out, but Eberling accused the Agency of "a behind-the-scenes censorship attack" motivated by offended bureaucratic ego.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Editor:

I read with interest the stories in the January *New Mission News* regarding the Mission as a potential redevelopment area. One point that should be emphasized is the process by which the neighborhoods "work" with the Redevelopment Agency. The citizen input required by today's Agency is really participation by nonprofit organizations and other organized groups. These nonprofits have an interest in participating in the Agency's lengthy decision-making process because they are likely to be the funded implementers of the plans. Through working closely with the Agency staff, the nonprofits and other organized groups ensure that projects and proposals are essentially a "done deal" when brought before the Agency Commission for approval. The Agency Commissioners, unlike the Board of Supervisors, are political

appointees not accountable to the electorate.

The Redevelopment Agency process is inherently less democratic and open to broad participation than other avenues in City government. This fact is not changed by the presence of dedicated Agency Commissioners and staff, nor by the excellent track records of the nonprofit and business organizations who will know best how to utilize Agency procedures. The problem is less than the ideological proclivities of the Agency than its structural function as a public entity operating outside of normal political processes. The sheer number of major political and financial players in the Mission will make Agency involvement a difficult proposition.

Randy Shaw, Executive Director  
Tenderloin Housing Clinic

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# mission broadsider

by andy solow

## REDEVELOPMENT!

In December, I wrote a piece on behalf of the Mayor's Mission Task Force regarding the possibility of bringing redevelopment into the Mission District. After reviewing a current copy of the California Community Redevelopment Law (335 pages), and discussing the subject with many Mission residents, property owners and business operators, I have decided to publicly oppose the designation of any part of the Mission District as a Redevelopment Survey Area for the following reasons:

The San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA) developed a bad reputation in the 1960s and 1970s when supposed "ghetto" neighborhoods were destroyed and rebuilt while allegedly "undesirable" residents were displaced and forgotten. In recent decisions impacting the Mission (particularly Walden House at 400 Alabama Street) the SFRA has clearly demonstrated its continuing arrogance and propensity to ignore the wishes of residents and property owners.

If it is possible to control the broad powers of the SFRA, redevelopment might be a powerful tool in rehabilitating the Mission. However, it is critical that the Mission community, particularly the residents and property owners, establish ground rules under which the SFRA would be allowed to proceed before either a Survey Area or a Project Area is approved. This is the only way that actions like the total rezoning of the entire Mission District and condemnation through eminent domain can be prevented.

The "Quadrant" or "Divide and Conquer Plan" currently being touted by many Mission nonprofit organizations would be very good for nonprofit agencies and very bad for residents and property owners. Under the "Quadrant Plan," the Mission would be divided up into four parts. This would only serve to further divide an al-

ready divided community and to quadruple the number of meetings required to complete the redevelopment process. The only people who like to attend meetings are the people who get paid to attend them: City bureaucrats and employees of nonprofit agencies!

Redevelopment is nothing more than a process wherein the net increase in property taxes for a specific geographic area and time period ("tax increment") is reallocated at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors and the SFRA Commission. There is no guarantee that any of this specially earmarked property tax money would be spent in our neighborhood. Further, redevelopment will NOT solve basic neighborhood problems like lack of jobs, street crime, public drunkenness and graffiti.

Once a Redevelopment Project Area is created, the ultimate authority to allocate and spend much of our property tax money will be vested in the SFRA Commission. Consensus-building bodies and citizens' advisory panels have no actual power to overrule the Redevelopment Agency. Even worse, if the "Quadrant Plan" is approved, the primary power to "advise" the Agency will be vested in the nonprofit agencies of the Mission, the most likely recipients of redevelopment dollars and the primary advocates for redevelopment (surprise, surprise!).

### FULL DISCLOSURE

The proponents of redevelopment have a duty to conduct all discussions on it in public. To this point, the overwhelming majority of discussions on Mission redevelopment have been semi-secret and invitation-only.

Redevelopment proponents have a duty to expressly identify the specific benefits that they or their organizations expect to gain from it. If a group believes

that it will be able to obtain a facility for its organization, that should be disclosed up front. Similarly, if the nonprofit agencies involved in constructing high-density, low-income rental housing believe that the redevelopment process will result in more money for these projects, this fact should be revealed. Since redevelopment entails a process of selecting and prioritizing projects, it is fundamental that proponents disclose what specific projects are high on their "wish lists."

Proponents have represented to the Mission community that it is possible to exercise extensive legally binding control over the Redevelopment Agency. Since their contention directly contradicts the unfortunate realities of the Western Addition (now known as the "Western Subtraction") and Yerba Buena Center, these proponents have a duty to prove their contention and identify the controls which can realistically be placed on the SFRA prior to going forward with a Redevelopment Survey Area.

### WHAT THE MISSION NEEDS

If a Redevelopment Survey is approved before a memorandum of understanding between the real Mission community and the SFRA is in place, the only winners will be Agency bureaucrats and Mission nonprofits, who will be laughing all the way to the bank with our hard-earned property-tax money in their hot little hands.

If we want to promote economic development and job creation in the Mission, we have to remove the primary impediments to business that are currently thrust in the face of every person who visits our neighborhood: public drinking and drunkenness, graffiti, and garbage.

We Mission residents have thick skins and are willing to put up with a lot of negatives in order to reap the benefits of living here. BUT, the average person does not want to live, shop or do business in a neighborhood where they have to run a gauntlet of drunks, prostitutes, graffiti and filth.

If we take care of the basics, the Mission will take care of itself.

### STOP THE SCAM!

My neighbors and I are soliciting signatures on the following petition from residents, property owners, and business operators within the 94110 zip code:

TO: Mayor Frank M. Jordan, San Francisco Board of Supervisors, San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Commission

We the undersigned Mission District residents, property owners, and business operators are opposed to the establishment of a Redevelopment Survey Area in the Mission District of San Francisco at this time. The current Redevelopment Survey Area proposal was drafted by a group composed almost exclusively of non-residents. This group has chosen to act without the participation or approval of the overwhelming majority of the residents, property owners, and businesses of the Mission District. The Mission is one neighborhood, NOT four separate quadrants! We urge you to reject any plan for a Redevelopment Survey Area that does not have the broad based support of residents and property owners as well as businesses and nonprofit agencies throughout the entire Mission.

To obtain copies of the petition: Please call "Stop the Scam" at: 281-0380 or 824-8114.

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# Neighborhood BEAT

## ST. MATHEWS CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY



St. Matthews Evangelical Lutheran Church, located at 16th and Dolores Streets, is the only church in San Francisco that conducts worship services in the German language. The congregation will celebrate the 100th anniversary of its church this month.

On February 10, 1895, 28 German Lutherans organized a congregation with the Rev. Hermann Gehrke as pastor. Their first church building was on 11th Street between Market and Mission. The building on 16th and Dolores was dedicated on March 29, 1908.

Services in English were introduced after the outbreak of World War I. All of the other Lutheran churches in San Francisco stopped using German in their services after the start of World War II. Only St. Matthews continued to be a bilingual congregation. It still is. English services are held on Sundays at 9:45 a.m. German services are at 11 a.m., patterned after

those used by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany.

The anniversary celebration promises to be quite festive. On Friday, February 10, the church will hold a potluck dinner followed by a concert of German classical music by organist Glendon Frank and vocalist Caroline Nuremberg. On Sunday, February 12, there will be a celebratory worship service at 10:30 a.m. The Walder Messe will be sung by the Pacific Saengerbund. German language choirs are scheduled to perform each month this year. And on June 11, there will be a festival celebration at 10:30 a.m. in honor of Robert Mattheis, bishop of the Sierra Pacific Synod, with music by the renowned choral group Chanticleer. (Incidentally, Chanticleer rehearses at St. Matthews.)

For more information, call the church office at 863-6371.

Eugene Kettner

cy- and parenting-related topics at each meeting.

By providing these services, the Center hopes to enroll women earlier in their pregnancies into prenatal care for a healthier pregnancy and baby. The Center has served more than 200 women since it began in 1994 offering extra assistance with the MediCal program. Clients meet directly with MediCal eligibility workers at the Center to have their cases certified.

Services are available in English and Spanish, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Clients who are interested or have questions should contact Lisa Clayton (552-2615 x322) for more information. The program is funded through the Department of Public Health, City and County of San Francisco.

## FREE PERINATAL CARE AT MISSION HEALTH CENTER

The Perinatal Patient Assistance Center offers free services to pregnant women. The Center, located at the Mission Neighborhood Health Center at 240 Shotwell Street, provides free assistance with MediCal applications for pregnant women and teens who live in San Francisco. The Center also provides pregnancy testing, help in choosing a prenatal care provider close to the client's neighborhood, and information on community resources and programs.

The Center also offers Peer Support Groups on a regular basis for clients and community members. These groups provide an opportunity for clients to meet one another and share information and experiences. Participants discuss pregnan-

## SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE RETURNING TO THE MISSION



Photo by Eugene Kettner

This empty bank building is slated to be the new district office for Social Security.

The old Hibernia Bank Building at the corner of 22nd and Valencia is on track to become the new home the Mission District Social Security Office. Formerly located at 22nd and Mission, the Social Security Office moved to Mission near Silver in October 1991 due to asbestos problems at the 22nd Street site and has been looking to relocate in our neighbor-

hood ever since. No lease has yet been signed but Acting District manager Ben Gryn was hopeful that, following a favorable ruling by the S.F. Planning Commission on January 26th, things would move along quickly. Gryn said the district office primarily handles payments to retirees and the disabled and sees 50 to 75 clients per day on peak days.

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP ON LEAD POISONING

The recognition and prevention of childhood lead poisoning by improving housing conditions of Mission District residents is the topic for a community workshop to be held February 18 at Centro Del Pueblo and again March 18 at St. Peter's church. The workshop is sponsored by St. Peter's Housing Committee and Neighborhood Green Corps, an AmeriCorps National Service Project.

A health educator from the Department of Public Health will show residents how to recognize the symptoms of lead poisoning and how to protect yourself from sources of lead in your home.

Other services available at the workshop include assistance and support in solving problems of substandard housing, protecting yourself from unscrupulous landlords, and meeting representatives from other community service providers. In addition to the workshops, five Neighborhood Green Corps members are working with the St. Peter's Housing Committee to prevent lead poisoning by going door to door in the Mission District teaching residents

how to protect their families from lead, how to deal with landlords who will not bring their residence up to code and how to access other community services. Neighborhood Green Corps is a project of Green Corps, a school for environmental organizing and Americorps, the national domestic Peace Corps program passed by congress last year.

The five member team is working with three local organizations, St. Peter's Housing Committee, Economic Opportunity Council and San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners to address urban environmental issues through direct service to the community.

St. Peter's Housing Committee offers assistance with housing related issues and landlord tenant problems by helping tenants understand housing laws and issues, interpret legal documents, work with the rent board, advocate for housing rights, defend against illegal evictions and rent raises and improve substandard living conditions. St. Peter's Housing Committee is located at 2915-24th street, phone #282-8877 and is open every weekday from 9am to 5pm.

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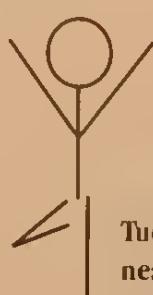
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# GOOD NEWS FOR TWO WHEELERS

## BICYCLE MASTER PLAN SHIFTS INTO HIGH GEAR

by Steve Berninger

**T**wo January meetings to solicit public comments and suggestions on a comprehensive new plan to make San Francisco safer for bicyclists pushed the issue closer to the desks of City lawmakers. The gatherings, attended by approximately 150 people, demonstrated

On January 24, approximately 70 people gathered at New College to discuss the first available draft of this plan (the lengthy official version is not yet completed). Everyone who attended received an opportunity to voice their opinion, and many aired concerns that did not make it into the plan.

One Mission resident, Steve Solnit,



Valencia Street is a major bicycle artery. Photo by Eugene Kettner

the determination of bicycle advocates to see their far-reaching plan implemented.

Hosted by the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition (SFBC), San Francisco Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) and Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT), the meetings offered a chance to see on paper the culmination of years of frustration with City traffic and spending policies, and months of hard work ironing out the plan's details. In compiling the plan, a City-financed consultant team worked with the three organizations and examined many aspects of the policies, procedures and physical infrastructure of the City that affect bicycling.

"I think it's a good plan because it recommends such a range of improvements, some that could get done in the near future, and some that represent long-term goals," said Peter Tannen, DPT Bicycle Coordinator. Indeed, the report considers more than simply which streets could use a bicycle-friendly face lift. It presents an extensive review of bicycle parking facilities, new City policies and education programs to teach biker safety.

said that the plan should emphasize "a crucial element": the need for proposed bike lanes to have adequate space for cyclists to ride without danger of car doors swinging into their path. He also addressed the danger of cycling in the Panhandle: The presence of dogs and pedestrians in bike paths makes it "safer to ride on the street." He added, "I know people who have broken bones falling because of dogs," and suggested the path be better marked to keep non-cyclists away. Another cyclist, Carl Woermann, suggested that the City might benefit from adopting a New York City law requiring that dogs be restrained on a six-foot leash.

Many felt the plan's stance on education needed to be strengthened. "The plan doesn't have a good means to offer cyclists an education of how to get along," Darryl Skrabak said. "We need to make bicyclists safer, not necessarily the streets safer, because bikers continue to make a series of mistakes that cause accidents."

Peter Skala also agreed that education needs to be emphasized. He stated, "Every dollar that is spent on education is

worth many more spent in physical improvement." And John Herraman suggested that the plan require bike shops to distribute safety information to bike purchasers.

However, others argued a need to educate motorists, not bikers. Ed Howden said that the tendency among motorists to give bikers inadequate space when passing exemplified "the need to get certain ideas across to motorists, ideas that could be included in DMV tests and manuals." One woman said the plan needs to address stereotypes and hostility towards cyclists to convince non-cyclists that a bike is not "just some kind of toy." She told of a recent incident in which a policeman, also misinformed on biking laws, nearly cited and fined her for "taking a lane of traffic" to which she was legally entitled.

Others voiced the need for an increase of police officers on bicycles, the need for a map to show the location of proposed bike lockers and a suggestion to create land-use incentives to encourage clusters of bicycle-related merchants whose presence could stimulate awareness, economy and the environment. In addition, Howden said his solution to the problem of bikers who run stop signs is "putting a two-word phrase on the sign that says, 'Cyclists Yield,' and presented Tannen with a sample sign.

But Larry Chinn warned others of the consequences of stop-sign adjustments and other structural alterations. "We don't want motorists to view cyclists as above the law with special rights since they received these expensive projects," he stated. "We should share the road, rather than have a separate set of rules. There might be chaos and increased resentment if you have a separate code for bikers."

In spite of the report's shortcomings, most were confident that the plan would dramatically improve the plight of bicyclists -- if enacted into law. One SFBC member, Kash, stated, "If implemented in its entirety and interpreted liberally, the plan will go a long way. Unfortunately, I don't trust City Hall."

Another man called the plan "quite an admirable total package" that, if implemented, would be extraordinary. "A tremendous amount of energy needs to be focused on convincing the Board of Supervisors to accept it," he added.

When asked what could be done by the public to see that the plan does receive the attention it deserves, Tannen answered, "Continue attending public meetings like this one." SFBC member Marilyn Smulyan stated, "The most important thing we can do is to come to some kind

of consensus with the plan and live with the things each of us disagree with." She added, "this is a city where you can really make things happen," referring to success of group efforts such as Critical Mass. "But, if we say different things, they'll use it against us."

A self-described "black sheep of the bicycle world," Jon Poschman, had a different tactic -- civil disobedience. He said, "We need to have people on the outside [of government processes] doing things to allow people on the inside to get things done. I'm tired of being treated like a traffic rat by cars on the street and the DPT. I've done my time at meetings, now I want to do my time in jail." He proposed bike rides on Highway 101 and the Bay Bridge, adding, "A little media can go a long way."

A significant part of the plan is the map, devised by the consultants and the advocacy groups, which pinpoints streets that need wider curb lanes, a bike lane or traffic calming measures to make them safer for bikers. On January 9, at Park Branch Library, the input from the discussion of this map was incorporated into the version which is still being finalized.

The approximately 80 people who attended the meeting were divided into 3 sub-groups based on where they reside in the City. An hour later, each smaller group presented its comments. A route along Columbus Avenue, another downtown, a safe way to travel from Potrero Hill to the Civic Center and extensive revision of Market Street were a few of the projects identified.

In the Mission, the map proposes a safer route onto Valencia Street from Market and a need for an east-west route through the District. By distinguishing 16th Street as a "bicycle priority street," the plan could lead to the eventual installation of traffic calming measures such as traffic circles or a physical barrier to prevent through traffic. However, these measures are some of the improvements Tannen thinks could take a long time to implement.

At the meetings, both the public and the bicycle organizations expressed excitement about the bike plan. Yet the plan still must pass its two most difficult tests: approval by the Board of Supervisors -- specific portions of the plan can be voted down -- and funding. According to BAC Chair Andrew Vesselinovitch, "This is a very important beginning. This should be a plan around which we can organize. Hopefully bicycling has become a significant mode in the travel mix."

The final document will be ready this month and made available for public review.

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by La Morena Natoma

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Because Rowdy loved all his homies,

it was easy to tell,  
Even the ones no one else could stand.  
He would kick back with a while.  
He always stood posted, like a soldier,  
on the 14th St. block,  
Telling it like it was  
To anyone who would listen

To know Rod was to know a close friend,  
Because Rowdy was always there for us  
Until the End.

Much Love Rod  
R.I.P. Mr. Rowdy NSL's



#### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S NOTE

Rodney Gomez was born and raised in San Francisco, went to Catholic school and sang in the church choir. He will be remembered by his friends for his wonderful sense

of humor, his warm heart and his ready smile. He was always there to lift your spirits if you were down. "Rod" was shot to death on Monday, January 16 - Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday.



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# AMERICA 502

NOTES ON THE 502ND YEAR OF THE OCCUPATION

BY ROSE ARRIETA

## NABISCO COMPLAINT

**H**old the Grey Poupon mustard. Think twice about using a Nabisco product. Workers in Oxnard have filed a complaint against Nabisco, maker of steak sauce, chili pepper products and Grey Poupon mustard, accusing the company of discrimination because supervisors restricted women from visiting the restroom and let men go whenever they wanted.

Several women took to wearing diapers and other forms of protection because of the restrictions. The complaint, filed with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), is a precursor to a class action lawsuit being prepared by lawyers at California Rural Legal Assistance, a statewide rural rights advocacy legal organization whose headquarters are in San Francisco.

One employee wrote in her EEOC complaint, "I have worn Kotex and toilet paper in the past and had a urinary tract infection in 1992. These practices are discriminatory in that men are not restricted in using the bathrooms as women are."

In Oxnard, the Nabisco plant employs hundreds of women during the peak period that runs from July to October. Workers said the hundreds of women on the food processing line share 10 to 15 bathroom stalls.

Workers said visits to the restroom were often limited to break time, and some caught sneaking off the line were threatened with being sent home without pay. Workers said they complained to the Teamsters' union but were told nothing could be done because bathroom regulations were a matter of company policy. The union's newly elected administration, which took office in October, pledges to support the women and their fight against Nabisco.

Nabisco officials deny the women's allegations. Company spokesman Hank Sandbach says "If you need to go to the john, you just raise your hand. We believe there is adequate access to the restrooms,

both during breaks and during work periods . . . We disagree with what they are saying and we find no basis for the charges that have been filed by the employees."

In a recent interview, a 62-year-old woman said she was constantly afraid of losing control of her bladder. "Some of the women cry because they can't hold it. I want that to stop already. It's too much."

## ECO-ACTIVIST ARRESTED

**M**eanwhile, over in Arizona, a support committee for a Native American activist is being launched. Twenty-eight-year-old Rodney Coronado was arrested by Federal agents in September 1994 at Pascua Yaqui Reservation; the government claims Coronado, who was born in San Jose, was responsible for a break-in at a research lab at Michigan State University.

The support group believes Coronado is innocent and is just another target of the Feds. Coronado has long been an outspoken critic of government and corporate abuse of wildlife and the environment. In the early '90s, he went undercover and secretly filmed abuses at a mink ranch -- a film that he later sold to CBS's acclaimed *"60 Minutes"* and that was aired on national TV as a major exposé of the mink industry.

In 1991, he claimed responsibility for the sinking of a Norwegian whaling ship for illegal whaling. As a result, he was largely responsible for an international moratorium on whaling.

On December 23, 1994, Coronado was released on \$650,000 bail, and his support group is trying to raise money for exorbitant court costs. Supporters say he is scheduled to appear in Michigan Federal Court in Kalamazoo in late March or April.

For more information about Coronado, contact (602) 322-9819 or write: Rodney Coronado Support Committee; P.O. Box 1891; Tucson, AZ 85702.

## MODERN TIMES TOP FIFTY LIST

What's the Mission reading? Here's a list, in order of popularity, of the top 50 sellers at Modern Times Books in 1994

1. Skin - Dorothy Allison
2. Always Running - Luis Rodriguez
3. Foucault for Beginners - L. Fillingham
4. Shipping News - E. Annie Proulx
5. Bastard Out of Carolina - D. Allison
6. So Far From God - Ana Castillo
7. Rebellion From Roots - John Ross
8. Como Agua por Chocolat - L. Esquivel
9. Prosperous Few - Noam Chomsky
10. Charlie Chan is Dead - J. Hagedorn
11. Teaching to Transgress - Bell Hooks
12. Haruko/Love Poems - June Jordan
13. Location of Culture - H. Bhabha
14. House on Mango Street - S. Cisneros
15. Race Matters - Cornel West
16. Technical Difficulties - June Jordan
17. Written on Body - Jean Winterson
18. Uses of Haiti - Paul Farmer
19. Outlaw Culture - Bell Hooks
20. US Capitalist Devel. - Douglas Dowd
21. Loose Woman - Sandra Cisneros
22. Woman Hollering Cree - S. Cisneros
23. English Patient - Michael Ondaatje
24. House of Spirits - Isabel Allende
25. What Uncle Sam Really...N. Chomsky
26. Girl Interrupted - Susanna Kaysen
27. Our Feet Walk Sky - W.S.A.D.C.
28. People's History - Howard Zinn
29. 500 Years of Chicano... - E. Martinez
30. Pigs in Heaven - Barbara Kingsolver
31. Tibetan Book of Living - S. Rinpoche
32. American Dreams - Sapphire
33. Casa de Espiritus - Isabel Allende
34. Gender Outlaw - Kate Bornstein
35. Different Mirror - Ron Takaki
36. Infinite Plan - Isabel Allende
37. Care of Soul - Thomas Moore
38. Devil, Delfina... - Louie Robinson
39. Dogeaters - Jessica Hagedorn
40. I Rigoberta Menchu - R. Menchu
41. CIA's Greatest Hits - Mark Zezezauer
42. Dreaming in Cuban - Cristina Garcia
43. Kitchen - Banana Yoshimoto
44. Postcards - E. Annie Proulx
45. Bean Trees - Barbara Kingsolver
46. Bless Me Ultima - Rudolfo Anaya
47. Devil in Blue Dress - Walter Mosley
48. How Garcia Girls... - Julia Alvarez
49. Memories of Chicano... Mario Garcia
50. Truck Stop Rainbows - Iva Pekarkova
50. We Came All Way From... - A. Obejas

## COHEN HOUSE WISH LIST

**T**he Richard M. Cohen Residence is a 10-bed residence for homeless men and women with AIDS who need 24-hour assistance with the activities of daily living due to dementia or physical disabilities. The rents are subsidized by HUD and priority is given to the homeless. The residence is administered by the Hope Housing Program of Dolores Street Community Services (DSCS).

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- Passenger Van
- Two-drawer lockable file cabinet
- Gift Certificates

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Towels  
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Garden Equipment  
Seeds/Plants  
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Bathrobes/Slippers

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# STEEL DREAMS

## "NIGHT TRAIN TO TUXTLA" GOES BEYOND THE USUAL BORDERS



by Richard Hack

With this book, Juan Felipe Herrera has taken another strong step forward and deserves to be recognized as one of this country's preeminent literary practitioners. A longtime Mission resident, now a professor at Cal State Fresno, he has been knocking readers' socks off for well over a decade. Few writers show a finer light, a deeper rootedness in a transient country, a more felicitous range of association, a better rhythmic sense or a greater facility for infusing poetry with techniques of video, dance, painting and theater.

*Night Train to Tuxtla*, his fifth and longest full-length collection, has great versatility of language, emotion and meaning in its 32 selections -- poems, sketches, tales and imaginative stories, vivid lineated journal notes and expressionist travelogue -- all of them liable to overflow the usual restrictions of genre.

In the foreword, "Train Notes," he describes his purpose: "The train is a terrible metal machine turned into a delicate soothsayer swishing on two eternal rivers of silver. Trains are made of dreams and

steel; if I could only touch on this elusive and sparkling swiftness in the poems, I would be satisfied."

He has achieved much more. It is a feeling of family that rounds out his stature. Looking back and reaching out, he has found relations extending far beyond the usual borders, from the parents "aware of the golden smile that lives inside language" to the rest of us: relations who animate his desire and cannot crush his natural optimism with disappointment. He is father or brother to many:

I'd like to say I am walking with a little girl still in my irises. Who do you walk with?

Do you follow her songs?

Into the tilted factories, the smeared taxis, the stunted universities, into the parlor of bank notes, in the cramped cook house where the dark-skinned humans still stoop and pitch the daily lettuce bags, the daily radish box,

our daily buckets of fruit meats? Is it so?

("Letter to Hungry Students of Berlin")

He is by turns "the hammer writer," comic, critic, lover, soothsayer, mystic and manically exalted city voyager too conscious to say something that would embarrass an innocent child. After all, we do not journey alone or just for ourselves.

His style is strong and suggestive in all of his modes. "Rolling to Taos on an Aztec Mustang" recalls a performance in a school:

On the bleachers, the children were clay brown, with clear eyes, black torches of hair.

I had never seen Indios and Chicanos at the same time, sitting in the same row looking like each other, not even in the heights of Ramona.

This city of blue songs taught me this was possible.

And their kindled voices: I could hear all their voices with every step I took in the dance circle.

In the longest poem in the book, "Memoria(s) from an Exile's Notebook of the Future," the setting is the Holy Land, all of whose peoples have conquered, ruled harshly and been oppressed in turn. Grammatically, it is a poem of one long sentence whose stanzas and clauses are connected by commas. The pointillist of hip annotations has now become a master of the flow:

the sweetness at the center, the flannel shirt pocket made in Lebanon, sewn in Tel Aviv, with your hand in mine and your face against mine, again, dance skirts and military caps, the moon broken and full of amusement, the stringed air, this frozen patch ...

an L for last, very last beggar-worker, the long step through the factory yard, the Southern tent hush, the crop picker standstill, bread rolls and tobacco

Time moves, people fight, die and fade, but the poet here has not abandoned his true perception or his ideals of justice. How could he, when creation is full with delight, desolation, injury, justice, mercy and the ethics of redemption; when "the lost body of the Chicano artist" must "deal with the U.S. military invasion into our body, into the Americas"?

In an earlier book with the kahhalistic title *Exiles of Desire* (Santa Monica: Lalo Press, 1983; Houston: Arte Publico, 1985), Herrera was critical of those for whom the time of the '60s was only a shallow fashion ("A momentary thing, a thing outside of time, ... a sacred thing/A brown beret thing ..."), and is still critical of political writing that amounts to a spew of stereotypical manifestos, the brutal abstractions of politicians or the cruel, sappy euphemisms of the press. For one with revolutionary ambitions, the "surreal" itself is not only real, but a means of exercising the forgotten autonomy and service to the sacred that so many people have mistakenly abandoned.

... I take stock of these frayed moments. I think  
as a clown; the shadowy Mexican kind,  
leaning jagged in marketplace air, believing  
his purplish sparrow puppet.

I linger with an ache, always.  
Still, I laugh, axe shaped  
inside, a Jack of resentments --  
raised from a trailer  
where I was born ...

("City Paint", *Night Train to Tuxtla*)

Poetry nowadays is rightly slammed for withdrawing to a few precious forms, for escaping from meaning and participation to the dubious safety of obscure theory, trite musings and clunky gibberish. There has been such an avalanche of flat, empty writing that many readers think literature is a forgotten trade.

Herrera is an advanced version of the genuine article. He has been around the fields and cities of California, the country in general, the hemispheres at large. For such an artful citizen of the world, reality includes the demands of the imagination, magic and religion, economic facts and the visions of desire. He is a straight talker, a voice you can trust and confide in, an eloquent literary hipmaster

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by Bob Parks

**I**s Carol Lloyd, the 31-year-old creator of the Writing Parlor, qualified to teach a course called "A Life Worth Living: Career Counseling for the Creatively Inclined"? Who better to teach writers how to invent their dream careers than Lloyd, who in two years has developed a popular writing school, set in her Victorian flat -- the Writing Parlor.

This season, on top of teaching "A Life Worth Living," Lloyd runs a curriculum of half-a-dozen classes taught by a bevy of professional writers.

Lloyd describes her class on self-designed careers as an intensive four-week course in which students forge a plan of action for their ideal lives. The next session of "Life Worth Living" begins in March.

"We're expecting a wide variety of people. It's both for artists trying to make a living through the arts -- or despite the arts -- as well as for people who have careers -- like a lawyer, for example, who wants to find time for other pursuits," she says. "It's not traditional career counseling; that is, there'll be no multiple-choice tests."

"I've made up a lot of careers for myself, but this is the best so far. This latest time is closest to what I want to do," says Lloyd, who is also a playwright and holds a master's degree in that craft. She began the Writing Parlor with the help of her husband, Hank Pellissier, who organizes monthly spoken word performances associated with the school. The Parlor was created without a real model or guide to go on, but Lloyd says she was inspired by the story of a New York woman who ran a successful theater out of her living room. Two years ago, they started with one fiction-writing class; this season, the same type of class filled so fast she had to turn people away.

Of course, people always say "You can't do that" when someone has a new

## THE WRITE STUFF

idea for a small business, but Lloyd knew that her Writing Parlor could offer a lot more in the way of atmosphere than extension courses or adult-education cour-

small-groups that goes on in almost all workshop situations, but the session was wisely run. For one thing, the emphasis was on writing, not talking. For a review,



Parlor-mentarians at work.

Lloyd says, you have to go to other classes at the Parlor or start your own writing group. "People don't come [to the Jams] for a critique, they may come because they don't have time to write during the week

and want to set this time aside." Since every Saturday is taught by a different writer from the staff, the Jam is also a good way to get to know the teachers before you sign up for a class. Less than most college extension offerings, these eight-week courses cost \$200 each.

Rather than promoting a school of thought at the Writing Parlor, Lloyd encourages a diversity of writing styles. The San Francisco writing scene, she says, "already has a tendency toward first-person, semi-autobiographical narratives; anyway, the movement is well-represented." The Parlor hires teachers with divergent backgrounds; some are interested in first-person dramatic monologue, some in science fiction.

Other hubs of the writing community like Small Press Traffic and area bookstores do a good job of bringing writers together, but The Writing Parlor provides an environment where people who are interested in, say, science fiction can get to know each other over the course of eight weeks. Who knows, they could make a career of it.

To sign up for classes at the Writing Parlor call 252-7643. The school is currently planning another mid-season workshop, possibly beginning in March, taught by writer Bruce Boston. It also sponsors spoken word readings on the first Sunday of every month at 1268 Sanchez Street at 8 p.m.

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# KOCH'S LURKING ARCHETYPES

by Murray Paskin

**V**iewing the work of Michael Koch is like traveling through a dense jungle of primitive, archetypal, and mythological images. Fertility goddesses, strange beasts, sacred animals, esoteric symbols, and undefined figures uniquely his own are strewn everywhere. Ghostlike images also lurk in corners and under things.

Koch's candy-colored, childlike drawing style give his work an deceptively innocent appearance. While playfulness is all over the place, the dark side -- garish, nightmarelike atmospheres; menace; the grotesque -- is also prevalent. This duality, the tension created by the dichotomy, arouses the viewer's interest and sets the work apart from the pretentiousness of some trendy artists who feel they are getting closer to the truth by painting like children. Koch's work is more accurately described as a kind of neoprimitive directness.

In an untitled painting, the suggestion of a totem in the center consists of a strange conglomeration of animals, humans, undefined beings, odd objects and symbols. The centerpiece is a human figure with a bluish, cubistic face flattened and distorted by what's on top of it. Toy animals resembling stomach and intestines float inside its torso. Two orange legs with miniature toy cars for feet are spread wide. A deep green, ambiguous shape between legs suggests both heart and testicles. A pale blue penis extends downward. Its head suggests the head of a mythological or prehistoric animal, possibly a dog god.

Another painting accents the fierce aspect of a fertility goddess. Everything about her is frighteningly exaggerated: Her mouth is thick and leering; teeth are gigantic; eyes are thick, square edged spirals; huge breasts contain mysterious figures; and monstrous blue legs are spread wide.

Koch is a relative newcomer to paint-

ing, beginning in earnest in 1987. Prior to that, he was a poet for many years. The style of his poetry has its roots in the Surrealist tradition, and he brings that sensibility to his painting. "In a way, painting is a visual complement to my writing. It's always consisted of highly charged visual

outside of recognized artistic traditions. He's also influenced by Jean Dubuffet, who championed that tradition. "Dubuffet railed against the notion of culture and high art. He was taken by the art of the mad, children, untrained. He looked to primitive art as spontaneous, unmediated

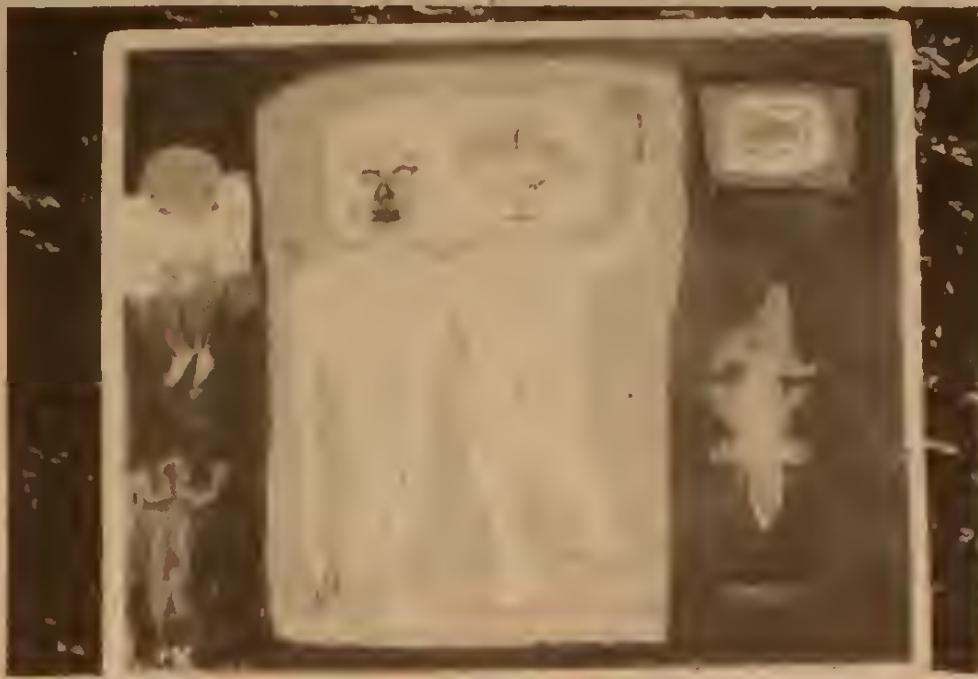
reason."

A 1988 visit to Santa Fe became a watershed experience that significantly changed his work. Prior to that, most of his paintings were no larger than 14"x17". Although the uniqueness of his style was impressive, the large numbers of small, sometimes minuscule, disparate images crowded into small spaces tended to overload the viewer.

A gallery owner became interested and encouraged him to try a larger scale, so Koch went to 32"x40" paintings. As with many important developments, the consequences were not immediately clear. For Koch, the problem was how to fill more space than he was accustomed to. Dealing with the new spatial issue transformed and brought a sense of wonder to his work. The color fields and images, now fewer, broader, and more defined, became richer and more resonant. The touches and juxtapositions became even more meaningful. The hues and figures began to relate to one another more, not in a literal or rational sense but in terms of feeling.

Most artists retreat from the question of the purpose of art, either their own or art in general. But Koch is unusually articulate about the subject. "For me, the process and result of my art are a counterpoint to the alienation of the industrial and post-industrial world. Instinctively, I think of it as opposition to a mechanical world of bottom lines, manipulation of natural environment, sense of scientific world view where things are simply to be dissected until they're understood, redirected or controlled. It's entering into the mystery as opposed to trying to dissect it, explain it, mechanize it -- making it available as a means to an end. There's almost a quasi-religious aspect to my work, in the sense of an awestruck attitude before the natural world."

Koch will be exhibiting his work throughout February at El Balazo, a restaurant located at 1654 Haight Street.



images and juxtapositions of disparate types of imagery. There's also the idea of underlying affinities between things that are not ostensibly related, making a leap across the most improbable chasm between one thing and another. I also like, both in poetry and painting, things that are suggestive. You almost think you understand what's going on but you don't quite. Somehow the meaning keeps receding, thwarting your desire to make sense in a conventional way." Part of the fascination of his work is the bizarre juxtapositions of strange objects and figures. It often has the baffling quality of a dream.

Probably because he has no formal training, Koch feels close to Naive art, a tradition of unschooled painters who are

expression."

Although having an affinity with the Naive, Koch's work has a sophistication in concept and execution not usually found in that tradition. Undoubtedly, his background in poetry and a lifetime of more than casual viewing of painting have contributed to this. In fact, a literary and cultural sensibility informs his work; one feels the influence of Jungian Archetypal psychology and pre-Hispanic and primitive African art and mythology throughout. "I often incorporate signs into my work. They could be Sumerian, Yoruban, new world hybrid, or native American motifs. Part of combining is recycling images that have been traditionally resonant for whatever mysterious

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# CARNAVAL OF THE BAY AREA COUNTDOWN

by C. M. Collins

Welcome back to the neo-pagan world of CARNAVAL-SAN FRANCISCO. (C'SF) words are weak substitutes for the heart-science of this transcendent experience but we do do our best... Newcomers are advised to begin your journey at one or both of the Brazilian Balls nearby at the Galleria at 1 Henry Adams Square. Dress to impress on Saturday (February 18th & 25th at 9pm) Brazilian Club President Roberto Lima is pleased to be presenting a carnival living legend direct from Brazil. Emilinha Borba, who still has more anthems of Brazilian Carnaval than anyone else. Also featured will be the dance troupes Birds of Paradise w/ Ivan Pandolfi and Aquerella w/ Maria Souza plus singer extraordinaire Lissa Silva and Celia Melleraros and her big Brazilian All-Stars band. (info-334-0106) As we mix the culture of the 21st century hereabouts, it becomes increasingly clear that the sensuous Brazilian culture, the most Catholic and biggest other economy of our hemisphere has enough paradox to keep even the most cynical deconstructionists on the dance floor.

Congrats to the top three C'SF 1994 finishers D'Midas (Grand Champ), Fogo na Roupa (Brazilian Champ) and Mas Maker Massive (3rd overall) who also showed up in force for Carnaval and each held elegant and fun off-season social events.... Despite a feeling that '95 was to be a breakthrough year things seem unusually quiet but there's still 120 days till Memorial weekend.... Biggest off-season event: the 9/94 resignation of 9 year MECA/Carnaval Impresario, Roberto Hernandez, C'SF founder/artistic director Marcus Gordon is occupying the former MECA office for now.... C'SF is ready to take encore bow from our PBS neighbor for starring in the excellent KQED-Chan 9 special (12/94) on the Mission, birthplace of the Bay Area. We are the world, we are the future, so let's start dreaming.

## CARNAVAL COUNTDOWN 1994 AWARDS & REVIEW

Best Caribbean: D'Midas International (1st overall officially)

Best Brazilian: Fogo na Roupa (2nd overall officially)

Best Latin: Comparsa Viva Panama

Best Indian Teakalli with Sanchez Elementary

Best European: Flamenco Anduluz (Spain)

Best Bolivian: Bolivian Magic

Best African: Cape Verdean (300 miles off the coast)

Radical Amazon Award: Batu Pitu 2 by float-builder Kip Farris outrageous combination of 3 traditions in archetypal red, white & black (plus flesh & energy)

Pushing the Envelope: Banyon with the great Peter Minshall's 18' fantastic famous puppets, Tan-Tan & Sago-Boy who ducked 14' streetcar wires.

Most Original Valkries de Samba by Stan Huncilman (see the 2nd coming of Brundilda at SF Opera in '95)

Most Photographed: Atop the MILA/Ginga Brazil float, the trinity team adorned in naked golden splendor, one triumphantly holding a golden globe (World Cup meets triple goddess in Judgement of Paris)

Welcome Back: Rara Premye w/ Blanche Brown, Haitian Dance instructor at 3rd Wave and Jose' Lorenzo leading Batu Pitu 2 Band

Most Improved: D'Midas, Mas Maker Massive, Cape Verdean.

Best New Entry: , Brazil- Oju Oba (& overall)

Europe-Flamenco Anduluz Caribbean-Pleasure Players, 21st Century Street Art-Valkries Do Samba Latin-Mas Salsa Indian-Xtuhcoatl Danza Azteca

Bolivian: Bolivian Magic

Best Band on the Street: Caribbean United Sisters w/ Pan Extacy (Mas Makers Massive) Brazilian Canstellation Band (MILA/Ginga). 21st Century Art: MOCA Band Latin: Luis Enrique (the Grand Marshal)

Largest Band on a Float: Samboas w/ Lissa Silva

Best Performance In front of Mission Mercantile 3-camera Video Shoot: Samba de Caracao (free SVHS or Hi-8 footage for contingent leaders on request contact the Grand Poobah Video 415/641-4924)

Breast Watch: Almost all were well-planned OP-rated

visions of the proverbial Brazilian Carnaval Goddess.

(12 pairs up from just Zenia's in '93) Pregnant Tummies were abundant as well... Much different from the childless Gay Freedom Parade in late June where tits & dicks express political or dark erotic feelings.

Massing in Action: Olodum, Brazilian World Cup Soccer Team, Pepe's Orchestra, SF Taiko Dojo, Sambistas Irlandes, Ron Gallegos Emperor for Life

Best Trend: West Coast Brazilian community discovering the parade

Worst Trend: 1st T-shirt sections, 2nd-Award Certificates instead of bra-less Goddess statues. Lets finally do medals or custom triple goddess statuettes

MECA Volunteers of '94: Ann Cervantes, Wanda Wittaker

Cross-Cultural Award: Suzanne Ladham, aka djSweetwaist of All Ah We organizing joint fund-raising parties w/ Escola Nova & Samba da Caracao

Best Rumor Bacchanal: 1st: Banyon & All Ah We (incl multi-issue poison pen newsletter, costumes stuck in

### ABC/KGO-TV SHOW ON CHANNEL 7

BABE of the Broadcast: Blonde Bombshell from MILA(Los Angeles) full 13 seconds

HUNK of the Broadcast: Paul Oshereko of Birds of Paradise (40 sec) whose wife Zenia has won the "TV Babe" award twice previously.

Best Planned TV presentation: A Walking Dream Solar Survivors lots of myth, magic & paradox

King Mario Pablo Chacon: "This is a good way to keep the tradition alive. This Carnaval does not involve people from one side of the world or the other. In this multicultural city you see people from South America, from Africa, from Polynesia well its a dream come true because since I was a kid I wanted to be King. Its amazing that I made it here and not my own country of El Salvador."

Queen Denise Joseph: "Coming from Jamaica and coming to America... we want to bring the joy and happiness that we feel that really helps to express who we are. It is definitely a part of our culture. Because being poor 3rd world countries, it is important that we have a spirit of happiness that really helps us through in the hard times... On the day of Carnaval, I figure that what will happen is I'll see all the people and I'll just get all the energy from them to really be happy to interact with every person in the crowd."

Favorite Narrative from TV YDU Carmen de Acee: Describing Caribbean Limbo: "A very symbolic dance, African men and women would pass below the bar to rise toward the light and deliverance and this would represent the path the soul would take in the new world and so the dance was a way of assisting, guiding, and encouraging the soul into the world of the ancestors. Singing, clapping and drumming accompanied the dances and the bar could go no lower than the hip." Don Sanchez TV's only reaction to the Brazilian nudity "I saw her in a James Bond movie before."

Best TV Trends: The five long moments where Don & Carmen let the song & dance do the talkin, 2nd-the KGO helicopter 3rd new angles from 23rd & Mission w/ sacred Bernal Backdrop Woost TV TREND: Small ratings drop

TV Programming Advice: Cut a family broadcast for Memorial Day Morning where there is no event competition (unlike Indy 500 on Sunday) 2) Begin the holiday morning program with a special broadcast of recently deceased Honored Global Citizens" to set up C'SF to complete a Neo-Platonic unity trinity rhythm of procession-revelation-return more popularly known as the "Cycle of Life" (e.g. life-death-rebirth) 3) Then cut the 11:30pm Saturday night show for "adults only, last act of Spring" to retake #1 market share back from Saturday Night Live. Too exotic?

Crossroads Decision: Should C'SF limit the time in front of judges/TV like two other Carnaval shows Philadelphia Mummers or Rio Sambadrome. Over to Marcus of MECA.

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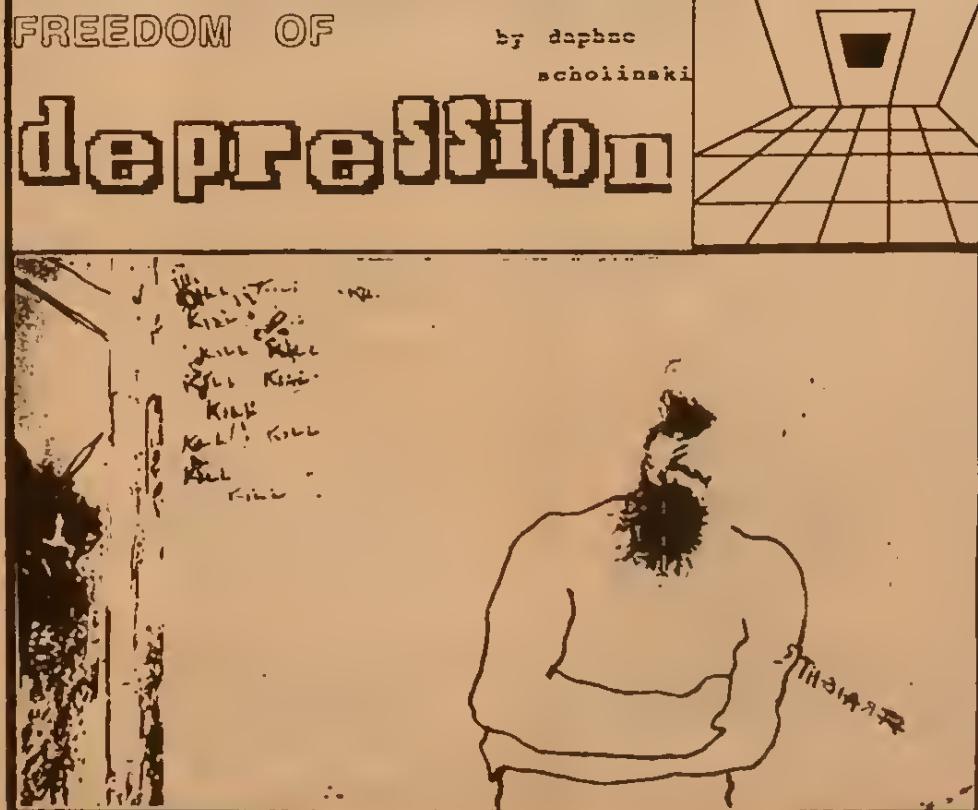
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## CHIROPRACTIC NOTEBOOK

By: Dr. Ross Williams

### WHY DRUGS DON'T WORK FOR LONG-TERM HEALTH PROBLEMS

I rarely watch TV. There is little worth watching that doesn't rot your brain and steal your life. Recently, however, I was on vacation for a few days and was staying in a hotel. So of course I did the inevitable: I switched on the TV. There was a karate movie on, which was so unbelievably bad I had to watch it for a while. But the amazing thing was that, every 15 minutes or less, they would cut away to a string of commercials. Guess what the overwhelming majority were about? Right! Drugs! Over-the-counter cold medications, Tylenol, Advil, special variations of standard aspirin, inhalants, laxatives, antiacid, creams, lotions, potions, and on and on. It was mesmerizing!

An illusion is being pounded into the American consciousness: These potions and remedies can make you well. In fact we need them to be well. The barrage was endless -- every commercial break, at least three out of five commercials were for medications. How did people survive 100 years ago without all this stuff? Did they all suffer from Tylenol and antiacid deficiencies? After a little research, I found the answer -- they did just fine. In fact, if you examine the records of the National Institute of Health, you will find that incidences of most degenerative diseases -- including cancer, arthritis, ulcer, bowel disease, heart disease and kidney disease, have either increased or stayed the same for the last 75 years.

Today over 164,000 Americans die each year from doing exactly what their doctors tell them to do. They take their legal prescription drugs and die from reactions and side effects. The US is number 1 in health costs but number 20 in overall health. We spend \$870 billion per year on health care, but our health index is the lowest of any industrialized nation on earth.

Why? Because of expensive, ineffective, side-effect-producing-drugs, surgery, and unnecessary "testing" and procedures, most of which are aimed at treating symptoms and the end stages of disease. Very little of the above are used for prevention. Most have nothing to do with your health; they have to do with money. Your money!

"I believe that if the whole materia medica as now used, could be sunk to the bottom of the sea, it would be all the better for mankind -- and all the worse for the fishes."

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES  
Harvard Medical School, 1860

### FEDERAL STUDY VALIDATES CHIROPRACTIC

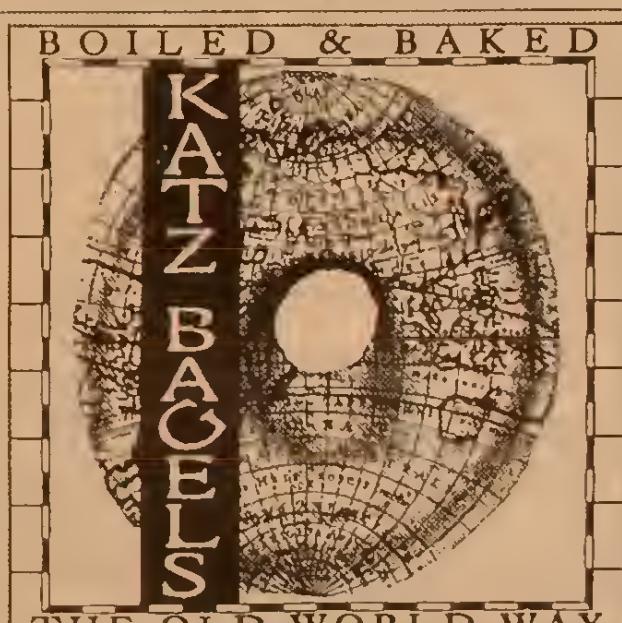
In a recent study, the federal Agency for Health Care Policy and Research has published its findings after evaluating 4000 low-back-pain patients. Spinal manipulation was supported as "most effective" for back pain. The study also warned against surgery, bed rest, oral steroids and acupuncture as ineffective in most cases of back pain. This story was carried on CNN and in most major news papers. We have copies of the San Francisco, San Jose and Chicago newspaper articles available for your review.

Chiropractors have been saying the same for 100 years. (Nineteen-ninety-five is our centennial year.) For the majority of back-pain patients, drugs and surgery are not the answer. The study actually stated that only about 1 out of 100 low-back cases are helped by surgery. Remember, this is not a chiropractic organization talking, this was a federal study done by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research.

The study went on to say that a very large part of the \$20 billion per year spent on medications and surgery for low back pain is wasted, since after the money is spent, the patients still have the problem. Further, they said the money would be much better spent on chiropractic and exercise "if long-term benefits are to be expected."

The findings of this study are in line with similar research done in recent years by the governments of New Zealand, Holland and England. In fact, any independent studies ever done about the effectiveness of chiropractic care have come out overwhelmingly in support of this drugless, safe approach to health care.

If you want more information or reprints of the articles call me at 826-1000.



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by Jacqueline Elizabeth Letalien

So something I've been doing lately is wearing a baseball cap backwards. Now I suppose there are those who would ask why a 47-year-old would be doing such a thing. First off, I don't look like a gang member. Second, I am supposed to have 2.3 children, wear skirts and be married to a guy I talk bad about to my women friends. Well, my excuse is that I'm a dyke, although there are dykes who have 2.3 children, wear skirts and are married to women they talk bad about to their women friends. So dykeness isn't the reason.

The reason I wear a baseball cap backwards at 47 is because I don't believe in rules or obeying them, although sometimes I do, but not in this instance. It took me a while to try this fashion trend that's really a personal statement. I don't like to follow trends. I put off reading Women Who Run With the Wolves for a long time because it was a popular best-seller and I didn't want to buy into the hype. Then, of course, one day when I was ready, the book happened into my lap, fell open and I avariciously ingested the content of its nearly 500 pages. I was ready. And that's why I wear the baseball cap backwards now; I am ready.

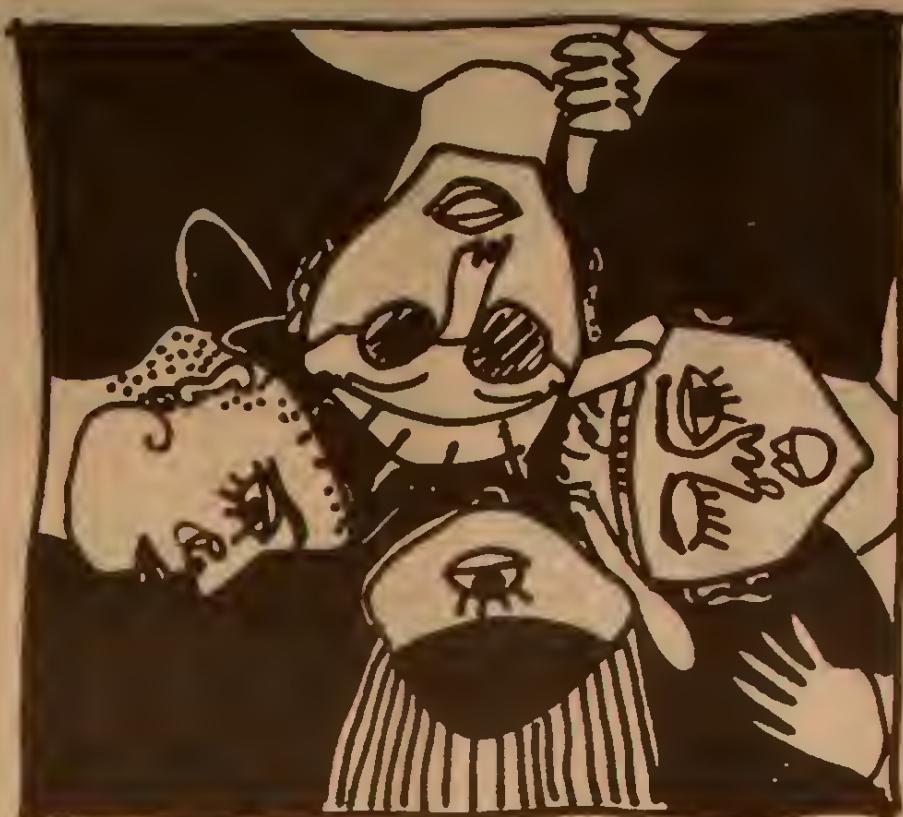
There's been a process to this. Of course it's been a process. Dykes are way into process. Everything gets processed, discussed, reviewed, analyzed, discussed some more. Kind of wrecks the notion of spontaneity, except that one gets in touch with the profound outlaw aspects of being a dyke. Then that's the end of process and the beginning of spontaneity. Anyway back to the process of it, because the spontaneity does sort of lead off that.

I noticed that punks and cholas y cholos wear baseball caps backwards. I wondered why. Yeah, it's the fashion, but why? So the answer begins. The first step is to find the right cap. Not just any one will do. I discovered this because I couldn't get myself to wear a backwards hat when I thought about wearing, say, a San Francisco Giants hat. For some people that's the right spark to step out boldly where few aged ones go. Fortyniners, naw; A's, absolutely not. Okay, how about plain? That's when I discovered that the hat is a personal statement made public, because plain got a big-voiced "NO." So then there I was going through the Cirque du Soleil merchandise catalog, and I found it: The Cap.

See, my culture is French Canadian, Canuk, Amerindian. And I've been rediscovering what that means and that Canuk means wild and imaginative and out there. The official cap of the Cirque has a medicine shield on it; this symbol is an expression of the soul, the spirit of the Canuk. I saw it and I said: that's it, that's the one. The cap's visible statement is my culture, my blood. So I ordered it and there was absolutely no hesitation; on it went, backwards.

The next in step choosing is learning the feeling of wearing this statement, taking this action, making one's self unusual. First of all, with the shield facing behind me, I don't worry about having to protect my back. It is protected by the shield and the visor. I also don't have to worry about the wind blowing it off; a practical side benefit.

The next step is owning the metaphor. In baseball, catchers wear their caps backwards. And who is a catcher? Well that's the player who's in it for the whole game



until the very end. That's the player who calls the pitches. That's the player with knees that don't give out. And that's the guardian of home plate. No one else on the team faces the dangers or has the strength of a catcher. I mean, catchers stand there with a 200-pound, 6-foot train headed for a direct collision and the job is to stand there like a rock and guard home plate.

I have to tell you that walking down the street wearing a cap backwards with a medicine shield on it in the tradition of the catcher, in the company of punks and cholas y cholos, my stride, my attitude is different. These are my streets, my people, my blood; this is my neighborhood, my world, my home; and nobody can make me drop the ball.



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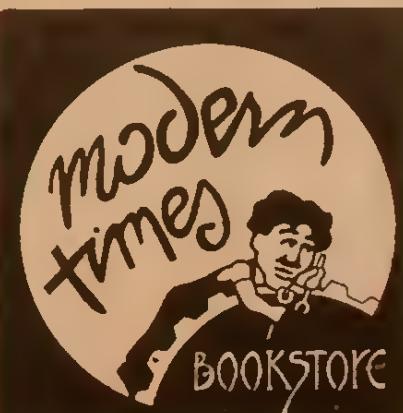


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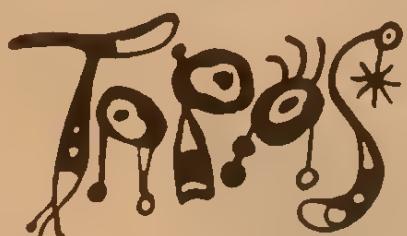
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# MISSION DISTRICT CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1st

Jhn Zorn's Masada - jazz at Radio Valencia through 4th. 1199 Valencia, 7 and 9 PM, 826-1199.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd

E Festival - a three week series of dance performances at Footwork, 3221 22nd Street at Mission. Tonight and Friday Takami, Fellow Travelers Performance Group and Joanne Nerenberg with Gravytrain. 8 PM, \$10-12 (with series discount), 824-5044.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd

Can Dialectics Break Bricks? - suicidal Situationist sitcoms, discourse and hallucination at ATA, 992 Valencia at 21st. 8:30 PM, \$5, 824-3890. (In French, of course, the language of discriminating intelligentsia!)

The Politics of Poison - the Environmental Film Festival on KQED at 11 PM examines how communities respond to toxic chemical dumping. Tune in before Newt nukes it.

Tnuch My Coochle - Performance lovelies Miriam and Juliana present an evening of solo and collaborate works about "girls, airports, clits, enlightenment and more". Luna Sea, 2940 16th Street, #216C. 8 PM (also 4th), \$7-10, 863-2989.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4th

SQUAD - E Festival dance with Stephen Pelton, Wells & Hermendorf and Joan Amaral at Footwork, 3221 22nd. 8 PM (also 5th), \$10-12, 824-5044.

AMOR-O-RAMA - Valentine's Day art auction at Galeria de la Raza/Studio 24. Preview at noon, bidding begins at 2 PM. 2857 24th at Bryant, 826-8009.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5th

Mark Little Quartet - the "Dream Walkin'" pianist with Alex Murzyn, Peter Barshay and David Rokeach in a free concert at Community Music Center, 544 Capp Street at 4 PM (647-6015).

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6th

Benefit for Small Press Traffic - readings by Gail Scott and Dodie Bellamy at New College Theater, 777 Valencia. 7:30 PM, their listing says Tuesday the 6th so call 626-0884 to find out which night is which.

Healing the Wounds of Shame In Recovery - a free eight week course offered by SF Community College at Everett Middle School, 450 Church. 585-5212 for information/reservations.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7th

BASTA! Land and the Zapatista Rebellion - readings by George A. Collier and Elizabeth Lowry-Quaratiello at Modern Times, 888 Valencia. 7:30 PM, 282-9246.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9th

A Place Where the Sea Remembers - Sandra Benitez reads a mesmerizing tale of long and anger, hope and tragedy in a small Mexican village. 7:30 PM at Modern Times, 888 Valencia, 282-9246.

E-Jerks - Potrzebie Dance Project, Erica Essner Performance Co-op and the

Knee Jerk Dance Project in Footworks ongoing festival... 3221 22nd Street, 8 PM (also 10th), \$10-12, 824-5044.

Sister Outsiders - Audre Lorde and Pat Parker in a 1987 video celebrating Black History Month at Bay Area Radical Women's Valencia Hall, 523-A Valencia. 7:30 PM (preceded by dinner), \$2, 864-1278.

Bimonthly Neighborhood Meetings of 16th Street Association, 8:30 AM at Centro del Pueblo, 474 Valencia (also 23rd at Columbia Park Club, 450 Guerrero). Call 558-8133 for info/agenda.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10th

Beyond the Pain of Incest - incest survivors Blake C. Areans, Dawn Rudd, Kyos Featherdancing and more "going beyond survival to reinhabit our bodies and rebel against silence" at Luna Sea, 2940 16th Street #216C. 8 PM (also 11th), \$7-10, 863-2989.

Who's Afraid of the Dark - a forum of truth, support and assurance for those affected by rape with Cynthia Carosella at Modern Times, 888 Valencia. 7:30 PM, 282-9246.

Neolist Cultural Conspiracy - prime freak Stewart Home (occultist, egomaniac and writer of London's best pulp splatter novels) makes his first San Francisco appearance at ATA, 992 Valencia. 8:30 PM, \$4, 824-3890.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11th

Renters' Convention - 10 AM to 4 PM at New College, 777 Valencia. Call 864-2337 for program.

All the Disgusting People in the World - or their images in a pair of modern primitive pig outs at ATA in Nick Abraham and Ana Cory-Wright's "No Age, New York", and Mark and Dan Jury's "Dances Sacred and Profane". Henry Rollins and his tattoos, Fakir Musafar and his various sharp objects, Nick Zedd (who ought to sue the mighty morphin' power rangers for nominal abuse) and, as ever, Annie Sprinkle. 992 Valencia, 8:30 PM, \$5, 824-3890.

Nesting Drills - with Fellow Travelers and Michell Spencer in another E-fest presentation at Footwork, 3221 22nd. 8 PM (also 12th), \$10-12, 824-5044.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12th

Crossing Musical Bridges - free jazz, baroque, chamber music performed by Community Music Center students at 544 Capp Street (4 PM, 647-6015).

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13th

Safe Sex Fest - with sluts, devices and board games to celebrate the one year anniversary of Good Vibrations' Safe Sex League, 1210 Valencia. 8 PM, Free, 974-8980.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14th

Kiss da Police - Valentine's Day brings the trial of Keith McHenry on his 92nd (or is it 88th) arrest for Felony Conspiracy, 8 AM at 850 Bryant. Bring candy for the judge or call 1-800-884-1136.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16th

On Site Dance - with Linda Carr, Stephen Pelton and Joan Amaral in Footwork's E-festival at 3221 22nd Street. 8 PM (also 17th), \$10-12, 824-5044.

The Other On-Line - internet for media makers with Theise, a cyberian and author at ATA, 992 Valencia. 8:30 PM, \$5, 824-3890.

**Freedom Voices Publications** - presents poetry and prose from Havana to the Tenderloin with Margot Pepper, Clifton Ross and Janice King at Modern Times, 888 Valencia. 7:30 PM, 282-9246.

#### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17th

**Off the Pig** - films by and about the Panthers and other black revolutionaries of the 1960s and 1990s at ATA, 992 Valencia. 8:30 PM, \$5, 824-3890.

**Video Diaries** - films on the local Asian community on KQED, 11 PM.

**Q-D MCs** - positive rap for teens with Malika and LaCreea at Mission Library, 4 PM, 3359 24th Street (695-5090).

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18th

**The Darker Side of Black** - Isaac Julien's investigation of misogyny and homophobia in rap and reggae music with films on Malcolm X at ATA, 992 Valencia. 8:30 PM, \$5, 824-3890.

**E is for ENDED** - the Gannett Performance Project, Erica Essner Performance Co-op and Takami in the final E Festival presentation at Footwork, 3221 22nd Street. 8 PM, \$12, 824-5044.

**Cat Obedience School** - behavior consultant Kate Gamble conducts this monthly seminar on problem kitties at the SPCA, 11 AM. 2500 16th Street, \$10 (with cat adoption discount), 554-3000.

#### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19th

**Rahrlt Obedience School** - Beth Woolbright and Marinell Harriman teach a class on the basics of bunny care at the SPCA, 2500 16th. Only \$5 (half the price of cat classes!), 1 PM, 554-3050.

#### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20th

**Concert with Conversation** - by renowned Russian-born Israeli pianist Yefim Bronfman at Community Music Center, 544 Capp Street, 4 PM, FREE (647-6015).

#### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21th

**B-Boy Blues** - James Earl Hardy reads from his black gay hip-hop love story between strong, tough-talking, street tough men. Modern Times, 888 Valencia, 7:30 PM.

**Erotic Reading Circle** - bring your erotic writing, smutty or sublime, and share it with the group hosted by Jack Davis and Carol Queen at Good Vibrations, 1210 Valencia. 8 PM, free, 974-8980.

#### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd

**Annie Sprinkle's Card Party** - everyone's favorite sex-worker turned performance artist visits Good Vibrations to promote her Post-Modern Pinups Playing Cards, featuring herself, of course, plus other pleasure activists like Susie Bright and Lisa "LaBia" Palac. Deal yourself in for a round of strip poker at 1210 Valencia, 8 PM (974-8980). Is it a straight a full house beats, a flush or three of a kind?

#### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd

**Dealing With Drug Dealers** - a workshop for finding practical solutions at the new Mission Police Station (17th & Valencia) at 6 PM. Sponsored by 16th Street Neighborhood Association (558-8133).

**ATA Open Screening** - a "stargate for misshapen, misbegotten, overlooked orphans of video". First come, first

screened... as long as it's under 15 minutes, 3/4", SVHS or VHS. 8:30 PM, free, 992 Valencia.

#### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24th

**Shoot the Women First** - German police advice to anti-terrorist commandos incorporated into film and video production by Wallflower Filmmakers' Collective. Access is open but biased against the rich, the white, the straight and the male (unless they're "indisputably" awesome). Call 285-2819 to submit. 8:30 PM at ATA, 992 Valencia, \$5.

**Sistaz Keeping Secrets** - original drama at New College Theatre with "Standing Trial", 8 PM, 777 Valencia.

**Living Room Festival** - short films at 11 PM on KQED including "Amnesia" by Beth B. ("a pithy collage of anti-immigration hate speech"), "Tell me Why" (John DiStefano's epistemology of Disco), "Fade to Black" (subtle expressions of hate and racism) and "talkin' 'bout droppin' out" (high school students telling their own stories).

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25th

**Dog Obedience School** - Bob Gutierrez leads this class on doggie discipline at the SPCA, 3 PM. 2500 16th Street, \$5, 554-3073.

**Bad Girls Go To Hell** - or to ATA where Peggy Ahwesh discusses exploitation oddball Doris Wishman. Also "A Taste of Flesh"... sexual anxiety, hostility and strange desire promised. 992 Valencia, 8:30 PM, \$5, 824-3890.

**Stop the War on Black America** - Freedom Socialist Party's interracial call to militant action 8 PM, preceded by a Southern dinner at 6:30 PM. 523-A Valencia near 16th, \$3 (\$7.50 for dinner), 864-1278.

#### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26th

**Proportional Representation in California** - discussion of California politics in Wilson's imperium at New College, 777 Valencia. Greentalks presents, Dr. Wilma Rule discusses, Mara Devines serves a vegan lunch of tofu and "other soyfoods". 3 PM, \$5-10, 255-2940.

#### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27th

**Alice Notley** - Intersection's writer-in-residence lectures on contemporary American poetic music and measure at 446 Valencia, 7:30 PM then, on Tuesday, reads from...

#### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28th

**The Scarlet Cabinet** - Notley's collaboration with British poet/novelist Douglas Oliver and other works in an off-site benefit for Small Press Traffic at New College Theatre, 777 Valencia. Both Notley events \$3-5, call 626-ARTS for more details.

**Movies for Pre-Schoolers** - ages 3-5 at Mission Library, 10 and 11 AM and 2 PM. 3359 24th Street, group reservations & other information 695-5090.

#### ONGOING

##### ART:

**Ashley Phelps** with Viola Keeton and Paul Beck at Adobe Books, 3166 16th Street through March 15th.

**Daphne Scholinski** at Josie's Caharet, 3583 16th off Market.

**Precita Eyes Mural Walks** every Saturday at 1:30 PM, starting from 348 Precita near Folsom (call 285-2287 for info/reservations).

**Digital Art Classes** through Artists' Digital Access, a suburb of Artists' Television Access (824-3890).

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#### INTERVIEW WITH THE WRETCHED

BY EVE

MAYBE IT'S THE RAIN. BUT MORE & MORE YOU'VE BEEN FINDING YOURSELF TAKING COVER UNDER BUS SHELTERS WITH THIS SENSE OF DESPAIR THAT COMES WHEN THE SUN HASN'T SO MUCH AS NODDED IN YOUR DIRECTION IN WEEKS. YOU ARE AT THE 22 FILMORE STOP AT 16TH & VALENCIA ONE PARTICULARLY SOGGY DAY WHEN EARLESS OSCAR, THE BUM YOU'VE BEEN AVOIDING TAKES SHELTER ALONG WITH YOU. INWARDLY, YOU GROAN - THERE'S NO ESCAPING HIM NOW - THE RAIN HAS YOU TRAPPED UNDER NEATH THAT GLASS AND YOU'RE FEELING TOO MEAN TO GIVE HIM A DOLLAR. THE CONSOLATION PRIZE IS THAT THE RAIN HAS HOSED OFF THE YEARS OF SCUM YOU'VE WITNESSED ACCUMULATING ON HIS SKIN.

"SURE IS RAINING ALOT." HE SAYS. "WHY JUST YESTERDAY IT RAINED SO MUCH I PISSED MY PANTS & DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT. ONLY WAY I COULD TELL WAS IT WAS THE ONLY WARM FEELING I'D HAD IN DAYS. NUTHIN' BETTER'N A GOLDEN SHOWER... AH, WHUT WOULD YOU KNOW... YOU LOOK CLEAN... WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU PISSED YOURSELF? IT'S THE NEXT BEST THING TO A HOT BATH, BUT YOU WOULDN'T KNOW." HE GLARES AT YOU WITH AN EVIL EYE, THEN SIGHS. "THAT'S OKAY. I WAS LIKE YOU ONCE, JUST GETTING BY BUT NEVER AHEAD, NEVER SATISFIED WITH WHAT I HAD, AFRAID OF ENDING UP LIKE SOMEONE LIKE ME, BUT NOT ABLE TO BECOME SOMEONE LIKE HER." HE POINTS TOWARDS A LOST LOOKING YUPPIE WOMAN OUTSIDE A TRENDY RESTAURANT. "ONE DAY I JUST GAVE UP. DIDN'T CARE NO MORE. WELL, I BET YOU THINK I'M THE MOST WRETCHED MAN AROUND, SO WRETCHED YA WOULDN'T EVEN GIVE ME A DOLLAR; HELL, SO WRETCHED YA WOULD GIVE ME A DOLLAR. I AM THE MOST WRETCHED PERSON IN THE MISSION! NOT IN THE WHOLE CITY, MIND YOU - A CERTAIN TENDERLOIN LADY GOT ME BEAT ON THAT COUNT, BUT IN THIS BEND OF THE ROAD, I'M IT. CERTAIN AMOUNT OF LIBERATION IN THAT, DONTCHA THINK?"

YOU CAN SEE HIS POINT - IN FACT, YOU'RE STARTING TO ENVY HIM A LITTLE, WHICH MIGHT MAKE YOU A STEP ABOVE HIM IN THE PATHETIC SCALE. GIVING UP SOUNDS KIND OF NICE RIGHT NOW, BUT PISSING IN YOUR PANTS DOESNT. YOU HAVE ENOUGH HOPE TO KEEP YOUR PANTS DRY YET NOT ENOUGH TO REALLY SHINE. THE STORM DIES DOWN. EARLESS OSCAR GETS UP, SPITS ON YOUR BOOT, AND WALKS AWAY. "HAVE A NICE DAY!" YOU THINK HE SAYS, BUT MAYBE IT'S JUST THE RAIN.





## ROUND WORLD MUSIC REVIEW

by Robert Leaver

### BAABA'S BACK

Baaba Maal, one of West Africa's best singers, brings his super-group, Daande Lenol, to Slim's on February 2; he is one of the few artists who can do both traditional and contemporary music well. His performance two years ago at Reggae on the River in Northern California will not be forgotten by any who witnessed this charismatic musician and his dynamic band.

In Senegal, he has been releasing cassettes of traditional music for years. Now some of this material is available released under fellow bandmember and mentor Mansour Seck's name. N'der Fouta Tooro Vol. 1 on Stern's also features the griot (hereditary traditional musician) Ousmane Hamady Diop. Both Seck and Diop play acoustic guitar and sing in that Muslim-inflected style while accompanied by the 21-string kora, bass and percussion. The guitar work is beautiful throughout this modern West-African roots release.

For the salseros, De Aqui Pa'lla is the latest killer from Puerto Rico. No nonsense here, just good hard salsa featuring the likes of Andy Montanez and Gilberto Santa Rosa on vocals, solid horn arrangements anchored by baritone sax, and a serious percussion section with occasional bata. The choice of song material includes a couple of tunes by Los Van Van and Adalberto Alvarez from Cuba. Oye!

On the Salsoul label comes the re-release of Manny Oquendo y Conjunto Lihre's Increible -- one of their early great records featuring the very young Gonzalez brothers, Jerry and Andy, on conga and bass, respectively; as well as Steve

Turre on the trombone. They have also put the classic Saco release on CD, featuring the young voice of Henry Fiol.

By the time this gets into print our local Latin super-group John Santos and the Machete Ensemble will have a new release out entitled Machete. Guest artists include "el maestro" Cachao on bass and Chocolate on trumpet. Three classic reissues of Cachao from 1986 when he was in Las Vegas playing with a small Latin jazz ensemble Grupo Wal-Pa-Ta-Ca are now out on CD. Featuring keyboards, percussion and Walfredo de los Reyes on trap drums, they all contain modern Latin jazz "descargas." These CDs were produced in Miami under the titles Maestro de Maestros, Latin Jazz Descarga Part 1, and Latin Jazz Descarga Part 2.

Out of Cuba the other Afro-Cuban folkloric group from Matanzas, AfroCuba de Matanzas, have a CD release called Rituales Afrocubanos. This group was also featured on the superb compilation Real Rumba. They play their sacred music on this well-recorded CD; the first cut is a 45-minute recording of "cantos y toques" to 19 deities of the Afro-Cuban Santeria religion.

Carnaval is coming soon to the Caribbean and Brazil, and many of this year's releases are coming out now. From Ice Records many early recordings of calypso from Trinidad are being reissued. There are now four volumes of Mighty Sparrow's classics and three volumes of Lord Kitchener. One of the first great calypsonians to achieve fame around the world was Roaring Lion; this "dapper dandy" charmed the ladies and roused the men. A collection of his material dating back to the '30s, Sacred 78's, features 25 classic



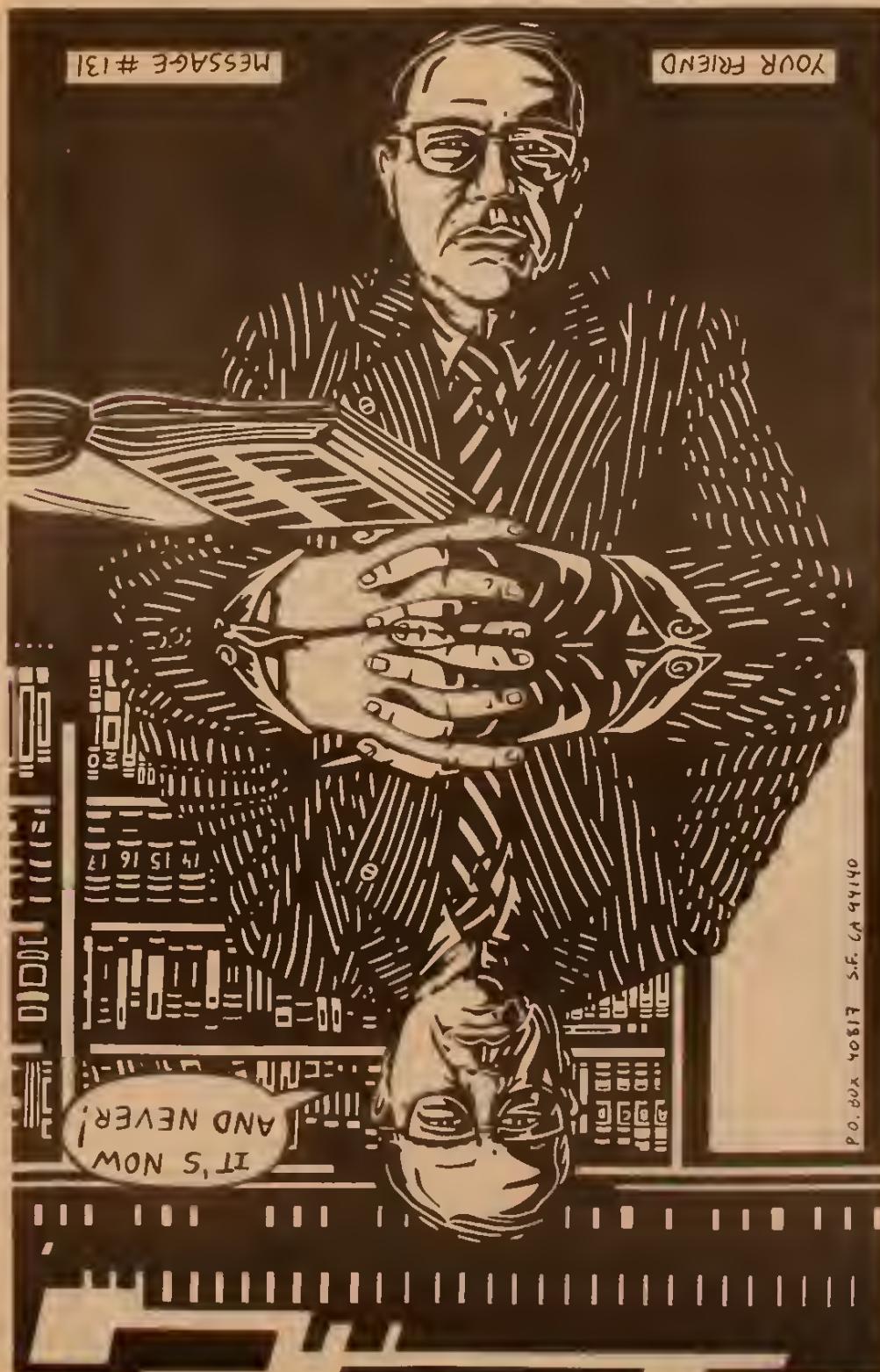
Um Mundo

cuts. His career began in 1927, and he's still around to give the occasional performance. Another collection features a contemporary of his, Lord Melody, who also held wide popularity; the CD Precious Melodies even includes a medley of radio commercials he did. Watch this space for a report from Trinidad's carnival.

One of last year's most exciting records was Timbalada, the self-titled release from this carnaval group from Salvador, Bahia, in Brazil. Featuring the great Carlinhos Brown, who earned Sergio Mendes his Grammy for "Brasilero," this was a large drum-wielding, horn-screaming affair. Now the much-awaited second release is out and bound to be at the top of Bahia's carnaval hit parade. The cover shows an aerial view of the shaved

and painted heads of the group, a variation on the first album's cover, which sported a picture of a woman's painted breasts. Cada Cabeca & Um Mundo show how sophisticated a bloco-afro can be. Drums, horns and chorus vocals are accented by piano and guitar playing some surprising riffs. This is the avant-garde of carnaval music.

For salsa and Cuban music, there is a new venue called Mi Pueblo at 330 Ritch St. off Townsend near 3rd that features some of the top local bands every Saturday night. On Fridays there is now a Brazilian show and dance affair at the Ferryboat, Pier 3. And at Nickie's on Tuesdays, DJ Cheb i Sabbah still spins his unique mix from Africa, Asia, & Arabia. Check it out!



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# SHE'S WAR

by Frank Stauf a.k.a. Deadbeat

**A**lack, my muse hath fled from me. What shall I write for this month's column?

Looking high and low for her, my muse (she's always high and low), I comb the Mission on a Saturday night. It has to be Saturday night because I'm a working stauf these days, temping 8 to 12 hours per weekday in the Financial District. Dull and tired from my shitty job, I seek her face among the battered, skinny whores of Capp Street, drag queens of *Esta Noche* ... up and down 16th Street ("chiva? chiva?") ... in the alleys where the winos pee ... in bars, in coffeehouses where the ignorant young egos batten ... up and down Valencia, I find her not.

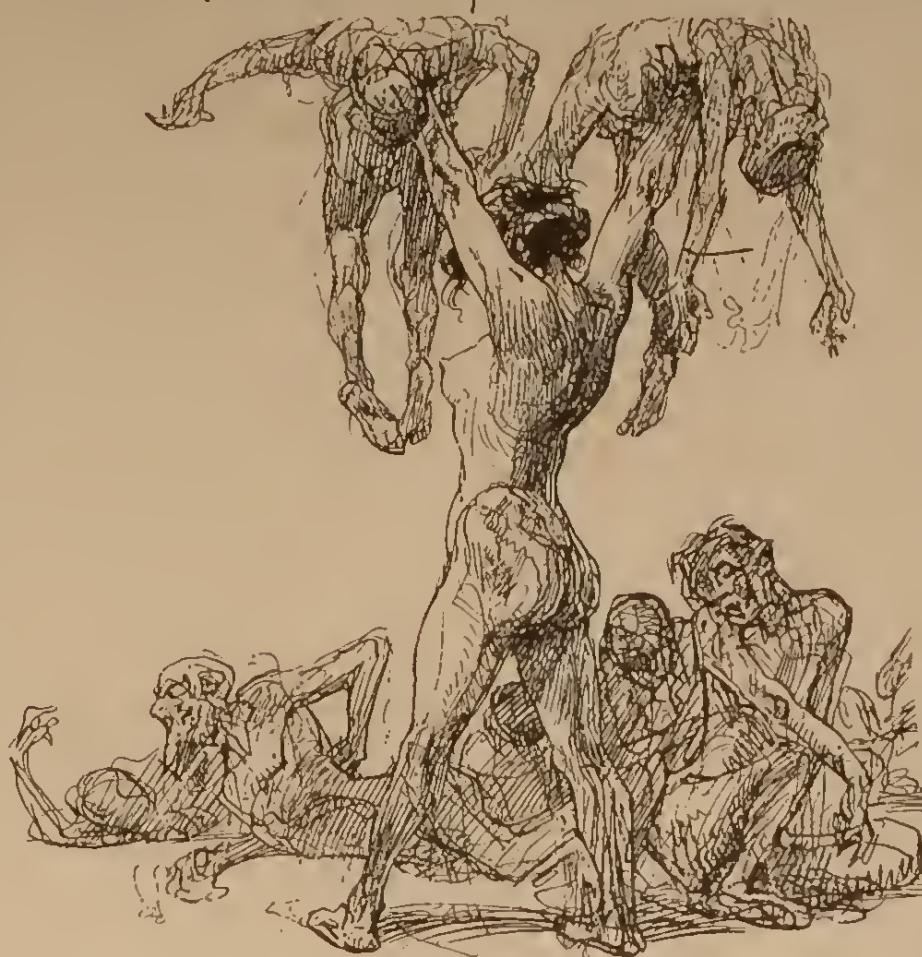
Oh sure, there's plenty that ought to inspire me -- a poem in every face, on every corner -- lines of prose in every crack of sidewalk -- but without my muse, the words won't come.

I make my way down South Van Ness, down to the All-Star, the Patel hotel where my homeboy poet Bill E. Badd downed his last pint of E&J before he died ... maybe his ghost can find her, seeing things I can't. It's worth a shot. Maybe a shot of chiva, too, to bring me closer to his side, but I don't trust these pushers. Probably they'd sell me Drano or a bag of rat poison, and I don't want to get that close to Bill. Maybe some other time, if I still can't find my blessed muse. No point in going on too long without her, boys and girls, just working for the boss every wasted day and down the TV tube each night into oblivion. That ain't no life, alone inside, without her bitchy-sweet nagging in my head and heart ... but then again, I do have beer and dope at home, and there is a pretty cool show on tonight ... feeling myself grow smaller, smaller, to accommodate her loss.

In the shadows, in the lamplight, in the darkened doorways and the neon air I find

no trace of Billy or my muse. Alas, alas, my poor white ass. "You need some chiva?" No, I'll pass. A whiff of gas; here comes my bus. Feed it a dollar and in God we trust. Back in my crib I turn on my TV,

grew smaller and smaller. By the end, they were midget mammoths, only four feet tall. If they were still alive today, Michael Jackson would own a herd of them. Amusement parks would charge \$5



now it's just it and me, together again, a friend to the end. Ah, shit.

Cool show on channel 9 tonight about the wooly mammoth, long extinct but not so long as scientists once believed. Seems they survived an extra 4000 years or so on some little island up north, and the way they survived is very interesting. To accommodate the loss of the vast terrains they once roamed on the continents, they

per ride. Good thing for them they're extinct.

Five bucks a ride, nine bucks an hour (gross) to temp downtown, it's all the same. Nobody who works like most people work, 40+ hours a week doing something they hate that leaves them drained and exhausted by the end of the day, can be expected to have continents inside, or muses. No wonder she ran away! I didn't shrink because she left: she left because I shrank!

Word is, wee folk aren't supposed to have a free mental or spiritual or any other kind of significant inner life -- otherwise wee'd grow, make trouble. Wee have to be kept small and scared and tired inside. One way or another, wee shrink ourselves smaller and smaller to survive on this economically determined island, cut off from the mainland of potential soul ... and it's no accident. This is how society was intentionally structured from the beginning, by the first priests and kings, to preserve a certain form: a pyramid: the

top on top and the bottom too exhausted, lied-to, threatened and cajoled to do anything buy stay on bottom.

Unemployment? Surplus leisure time? Just pump it full of E&J or crack or chiva (sponged up eagerly by shrink-dried souls), so that the finger of authority can point, the talking heads can say, "You see? These people *need* to work for a master. They need structure, they need *limits*, or they become a danger to themselves and others" -- until we're actually *demanding* to be enslaved!

Of course, "No Work, No Bread" may have something to do with it too -- except that there's more than enough bread to go around. The whole arrangement has become increasingly artificial, as new products are created in order to create new consumers, to create new jobs, to employ the consumers, leaving them small and tired but able to buy more new products, which creates new jobs, ad nauseam, toward the goal of "full employment" -- and this is supposed to be *good*?

I'm not saying work in itself is bad. Creative or engaging or constructive work, willingly undertaken, is necessary and good. So is mindfully taking care of the essentials. Even Pygmies in the rain forest have to work 10 or 12 hours a week to supply their needs ... but that's not quite the same as baking bricks for Pharaoh all day long to buy Air Jordans and Nintendo and an occasional loaf of Wonder Bread for the kiddies. See, Pygmies may be small on the outside, like those midget mammoths, but on the inside they're as big as forest spirits -- whereas we're all getting smaller so as to fit into our TV sets and our jobs. The Pygmies may not have cars or bars or Star Trek, but they do enjoy the advantage of not having been royally and religiously screwed in the ass for the last 4000 years.

The sheer enormity of what's been put over on us is becoming too much to contain. I feel it pushing at my recently-contracted inner walls and suddenly the window shatters with a CRASH -- my muse is back! She's swung into the room on a jungle vine, in camouflage fatigues and combat boots, a black beret! Around her neck, a necklace of the fingerbones of academic poets! In her hand, a mini-mammoth-tusk dagger!

Now I get it! -- holding on tight, swinging on the vine with her, my love, into the guerilla night: She's not a hobby, not a job, career, or lifestyle choice.

She's WAR.



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